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THE

LIFE

OF

TITIAN:

WITH ANECDOTES OF

THE DISTINGUISHED PERSONS OF HIS TIME.

BY JAMES NORTHCOTE, ESQ. R.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,

8, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1830.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY C. AND W. REYNELL,

Broad Street, Golden Square.

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THE

LIFE OF TITIAN.

CHAPTER XXV.

LETTERS AND PAPERS RELATIVE TO MICHAEL ANGELO.

"BRIEF OF JULIUS THE SECOND TO THE PRIORS AND THE HOLY STANDARD-BEARER OF JUSTICE OF THE FLORENTINE PEOPLE.

"HEALTH and apostolic benediction to our dear sons! Michael Angelo, sculptor, who fled from us without any reason but through mere caprice, as far as we have been able to learn, fears to return to our presence, although we have no complaint to make against him. We understand very well the humour of that sort of men; but however, to take away all fear from his breast, we exhort you, by that affection which

you bear us, to promise him from us, that if he pleases to return, he shall meet with no bad treatment, and that he shall receive that same apostolic favour which we showed him before he fled from our presence.

"Given at Rome this eighth day of July 1506, in the third year of our Pontificate."

A WRITING OF LEONARDO BUONAROTTI, MICHAEL ANGELO'S FATHER.

CONTAINING THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN HIM AND DOMINICO GHIRLANDAJO AND DAVID DI TOMMASO DI CORRADO, FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF YOUNG MICHAEL IN THEIR ART BY ADMITTING HIM AS ONE OF THEIR PUPILS. MICHAEL ANGELO WAS THEN ABOUT FOURTEEN.

The agreement, preserved by the descendants of Ghirlandajo, is as follows:—

"1488.—I acknowledge, this first day of April, how I, Louis di Leonardo di Bonarotta, place my son Michael Angelo with Dominic and David di Tommaso di Corrado, for the three next years, upon the understanding and agreement that the said Michael Angelo is to live with the aforesaid Dominic, &c. during the aforesaid time, to learn to paint, to study, and to do what his masters bid him. The said Dominic and David are to give him, during the three years, twenty-four florins salary: that is

to say, for the first year six florins, for the second, eight; and for the third, ten; making in all ninety-six livres."

Under this agreement is written in the hand of Leonardo, "The aforesaid Michael Angelo has received, this sixteenth day of April, two florins in gold of his masters; and I, Ludovico di Leonardo, have received of him twelve livres in ready money."*

"TO OUR DEAR SON MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI, CITIZEN OF FLORENCE.

"OUR DEAR SON, WE SALUTE YOU:

"Our love for your person and extraordinary talents is undiminished. One of our wishes is, that you may preserve your health and enjoy a long life, which may enable you to continue to aggrandize the city of Rome, your family, and yourself, as you deserve. As we are as anxious that you should enjoy good health as that you should live long, and knowing that your labours increase daily on account of your science and that they might easily cause your death, we

* It is a remarkable thing that these masters paid their pupils a salary; and it renders it probable that Michael Angelo had made some proficiency in painting before he entered the school of Ghirlandajo.

order you, under pain of excommunication *lætæ sententiæ*, by these presents, that on receipt of them, you engage in no work, either of painting or sculpture, except our tomb, for which we have given you a commission. You will show your obedience to our orders by taking care of your health.

"Given at Rome, under the sinner's seal (that is, ring-seal) the twenty-first of November 1511, the eighth year of our Pontificate.

"EVANGELISTA."

"LETTER OR BRIEF OF PAUL THE THIRD TO MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

"Rome, near St Mark, 1st September 1535, the 1st year of our Pontificate.

"From regard to the memory of our predecessor Clement the Seventh, and also myself wishing to give you a satisfactory recompense for the picture you are to paint for the altar of our chapel, representing the Last Judgment; considering your labour and your talents, with which you so amply ornament our age, we promise you by this brief a pension of twelve hundred golden crowns a-year for your life: and in order that you may apply your whole attention to finishing the aforesaid work, which you have com-

menced with our apostolic authority, in force by this our present brief, we also, during your life, grant you the ferry of the Po, near Placenza, which John Francis Burla enjoyed while alive; with all the customary emoluments, the jurisdiction, honours, and tolls on merchandise; this will liquidate part of your salary, that is to say, six hundred golden crowns, which is the annual return of this ferry: our promise remaining always fixed as to the other six hundred crowns for your life. We command our present vice-legate of Cispadan Gaul and his successors, our dear sons the magistrates and inhabitants of the said town of Placenza, and all whom it may concern, to let it be known that we give you or your deputy the possession of the said ferry, and the trade of it, &c. We command that, it being given to you, the inhabitants protect you and let you peaceably enjoy our grant during your life, any thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

(Signed) "Blosio."

"TO THE DIVINE MICHAEL ANGELO.

"Venerable Man!

"As it shows little care of one's reputation not to remember God, so it also argues a con-

tempt for wisdom and a want of judgment not to feel for you that veneration which you so highly deserve, since heaven has pleased to shower on you all its graces and gifts. It is on that account that the idea of a new and perfect nature breathes, though concealed in your hands, and that the difficulty of outlines (that great mystery of painting) is so easy to you, that you reduce the extremities of the body within the bounds of art; a thing hitherto looked upon by artists themselves, as impossible to be brought to perfection; because the extremity ought, you know, to bound itself, and to terminate in such a manner as while it makes itself quite apparent, it should set off other objects, as in the figures in the chapel of St Lorenzo,* which exercise the judgment no less than they call forth admiration.

" Now I, who by praise or abuse have distributed the greatest quantity of merit or demerit, in order not to change in any respect the little that I am, salute you. I should not dare to do this if my name, which has reached the ears of all the princes of the earth, had not acquired a certain degree of celebrity. I ought indeed to regard you with the greatest respect, since the world has many princes, but only one Michael Angelo.

* At Florence.

"Wonderful thing! Nature cannot have any thing however elevated but your talent discovers it, and imprints on your works the same grandeur and majesty with the vast power of your style and your chisel. Thus he who sees you does not regret the loss of Phidias, Apelles, and Vitruvius, for they were but the shadow of Michael Angelo. I rather think it a happy thing for Parrhasius and the other great painters of antiquity, that time has not permitted their works to reach us: which is the only reason, that whatever credit we allow to what history relates of them, we hesitate to give them that decided palm of superiority which they themselves would give you, calling you the only sculptor, the only painter and architect, if they could judge, like us, of your immortal works.

"But, if it be so, why do you not content yourself with the glory you have already acquired? It appears to me that it ought to suffice you to have excelled every body else; yet I conceive that in the End of the World, which you have now in hand, you are endeavouring to surpass the Beginning, already done; that your pictures, excelling each other, may assure you one triumph more.

"Who would not tremble at taking up his

pencil to trace so tremendous a subject? I see in the midst of innumerable beings, Antichrist, with features which you alone could imagine; I see terror impressed on the face of the living; I see the faint traces of the sun, the moon, and the stars, whose fires are perceptibly diminishing. The elements appear dissolving. I see all nature horror-struck, barren, and gathered up in its decrepitude. I see Time emaciated and trembling; who, arrived at his last stage, is reposing on the dried-up trunk of a tree; and while the trumpets of the angels resound through all hearts, I see Life and Death overwhelmed with extraordinary confusion; the one is wearied with lifting up the dead, while the other strikes down the living. Behind I see Hope and Despair, conducting troops of the good and bad. The sky is suffused with the brightest rays; Christ, seated on clouds, is environed with splendour, and with the terrors inspired by the heavenly hosts. His face is resplendent with light; and his eyes, shining with a soft yet terrible fire, fill the virtuous with lively joy, and the wicked with mortal fear. I see the ministers of hell with horrible countenances, who surrounded by the glory of saints and martyrs, mock the Cæsars and Alexanders for conquering the world, and yet not

knowing how to get the better of themselves. I see Renown, with her crowns and palms trodden under foot, thrown down under the wheels of her own triumphal chariots.

"I hear the Son of God pronouncing the Last Judgment. At his voice the good and the bad are separated; the world crumbles to pieces at the peals of thunder. Darkness divides Paradise from the furnaces of hell. In retracing these terrible images, I said to myself, one would tremble as much at seeing the work of Bonarotti, as at the day of judgment itself.

"Do not think, Sir, that the vow I had made never to go to Rome again, can hold good against my desire of seeing such a picture. I will rather tell a lie, than do so great injustice to your talents. I entreat you will believe in the desire I have to extol them.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, 15th Sept. 1537."

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI TO PETER ARETIN.

"MAGNIFICENT SIR AND MY BROTHER,

"The receipt of your letter has given me at once both joy and sorrow; joy, because the letter came from you, who are the only model

of knowledge in the world; and sorrow that, having finished part of my subject, I was unable to avail myself of the treasures of your imagination, which is so perfect, that if the last day had arrived and you had actually witnessed its horrors, you could not have given a better description of it. But in answer to the good opinion you have of me, I will convince you that your letter is a source of great satisfaction to me, by asking you to publish it, since Kings and Princes esteem it a very great favour if your pen deigns to notice them.

"If I have any thing, the possession of which would please you, it is most heartily at your service. In the meantime, I trust your resolution of not coming to Rome will not prevail over your wish to see the pictures on which I am at present engaged: that would be very disagreeable to me. I finish my letter with recommending myself to you."

"TO M. LUCAS MARTINI.

"Rome.

"I received, by M. Bartholomew Bettini, your letter, containing a little comment on one of my sonnets, written by M. Benedetto Varchi: the sonnet comes from me, the comment from heaven. It is truly admirable. I

do not say this merely on my own judgment, but on that of many learned men, and particularly of M. Donato Giannoti, who is never tired of reading it. He desires to be remembered to you. As for the sonnet, I know whom they mean; but be it who it may, I cannot help being a little vain, since it has been the means of producing so fine and learned a criticism. I know, from the language of the author, and the praises he bestows on me, that he thinks more of me than I deserve; I beg you to thank him for it from me in terms suitable to so much kindness and affection. I ask you to do this because I am unable to do it so well myself. He who is thought much of, should not tempt fortune; it is better to hold one's tongue than to lose one's reputation; I am old, and death has taken away my youthful thoughts. Who does not know what old age is? Be patient enough to wait its arrival, for you will not know it before. Commend me, as I said before, to Varchi, as one who loves his person as well as his virtue. I am entirely at his service.

"Michael Angelo Bonarotti."

This sonnet was one of those which Michael Angelo composed in his youth. His taste for

poetry did not last long; it ceased when Cosmo de Medicis obtained his father's consent that he should entirely devote himself to sculpture, for which profession he had not at first been designed. Cosmo, who had just been raised to the throne of Florence, requited this complaisance by inviting him to partake of the pleasures of his court. The austere Michael could not however find any pleasure there; he could not forget the yet recent murder of Duke Alexander, of which Vasari had been almost an eye-witness, and which he described so well after his flight from Florence, where he did not think his life in safety.

Michael Angelo, however, composed a few sonnets in his old age, in order to shew his envious detractors that the Muses yet smiled on him. These sonnets are very beautiful, written in a philosophical strain, and tinged with that melancholy which clouded all his days. Of these poems there have been two editions, printed at Florence.

" TO M. BARTHOLOMEW.

" It cannot be denied that Bramanti was as great an architect as has ever appeared since the time of the ancients to the present. He

laid the foundation of St Peter's, not full of confusion, but clear, simple, luminous, and apart, so that it could in no way obstruct the other details of the palace. It was, as it is now, looked upon as a wonderfully fine thing, so that whoever swerves from the said plan of Bramanti, as Sangallo has done, swerves from the true one; and any one can see it in his model, who is not led away by prejudice.

" Sangallo, by the circle he has planned for the outside, takes away all the lights which were in Bramanti's plan; and this is not the only fault, for he will have none for those little dark places both above and beneath the choirs; a very convenient thing for people of bad life, for hiding robbers, for people to coin bad money in, &c., so that in the evening, when it is necessary to lock up the church, there must be at least twenty-five people to see that no one is concealed; and even they would have a great deal of trouble.

" There is also another inconvenience; which is, that in this circle, with the additions intended on the outside, called *composition of Bramanti*, it would be necessary to pull down the chapel of St Paul, the chambers where they seal the bulls with lead, the rota, and many other parts of the edifice: I doubt even if the

Sistine Chapel could be all retained. As to the circular part outside, which is said to have cost a hundred thousand crowns, that is not true, because it could be done for sixteen thousand: the pulling it down would not be a bad thing at all, because the stones and the foundations would be of the greatest use; the building would gain two hundred thousand crowns and three years' labour. This appears to me the most dispassionate view of the subject; but to finish it would be a loss to me of a great deal of time. If you can let the Pope understand as much, you would do me a great pleasure, for I am not over well. Yours,

"MICHAEL ANGELO BONAROTTI."

"TO NICHOLAS MARTELLI, ROME.

"M. Nicholas, I received by M. Vincent Perini, your letter, containing three sonnets and a madrigal. The letter and the sonnet, addressed to me, are so admirable that the most fastidious critic could find no fault with them. Indeed I am so much praised in both, that if I were an angel in Paradise I could not be more so. I see you have a notion that I am just as God would have me; but I am only a poor man, of very little worth, fatiguing my-

self in the art which God gave me, in order to live as long as possible. But be I what I may, I am always your servant, and that of all the house of Martelli. I thank you for your letter and the sonnets; but I am not arrived at such a degree of politeness, as to be able to acknowledge my obligations as I ought.

"M. Buonarotti."

"TO M. SILVESTER DI MONTALTO AND COMPANY, ROME.

"You have now in deposit, for the payment of the three statues in marble by the sculptor Raphael de Montelupo, a hundred and seventy crowns of our money, that is ten Juliuses each; and the said Raphael having finished them, and placed them in St Peter's *in Vincola*, upon the tomb of Pope Julius, you will have the goodness to pay to his order the said sum, since he has fulfilled his obligation in executing the said three figures; that is, the Virgin holding her infant in her arms, a Prophetess, and a Sybil, all larger than life. Yours,

"Michael Angelo Bonarotti."

"TO M. LEONARD BONAROTTI, AT ROME.

"I would rather die than be in disgrace with the Duke. I always endeavour to keep my promise in every thing; if I did not come to Florence at the time agreed upon, it was because I had always understood it was a settled thing that I should not leave Rome till I had finished the building of St Peter's, that I might not give them any excuse for cheating me, as usual, and as was wished for by my enemies. I always applied myself as much as I do now, because as many think, and as in fact I do myself, I have been placed where I am by God; but I could not succeed in advancing the building as I wished, the funds and workmen failing. However, I was not willing to give it up because I am old, and have no other work to leave behind me. I serve for the love of God, in whom I have placed all my hope.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BONAROTTI."

"TO VASARI.

"MY DEAR GEORGE,

"Do you think, that if I could recollect how I had arranged the staircase of the library of St Lorenzo at Florence, of which I have heard so much, I should want any pressing

to tell it? I remember well (but it is like the recollection of a dream) a certain staircase; but I do not think it is precisely the same as what I then arranged, for if it be what I seem to recollect it was, it would be a stupid affair. However, I will describe it. I took a number of oval boxes, about a hand high, but not equal in length or breadth, and I put the largest and the first on the pavement, as far from the door as you would wish the stairs to be easy or difficult to ascend; I put another on that, which was every way smaller, so as to leave sufficient space on the under one to put a foot on; and so on, putting smaller ones, and approaching them to the door, always ascending. The diminution of the last step must be of the same extent as the width of the door; and the said part of the round oval staircase should have, as it were, two wings, one on each side, which accord with the same steps, which are not oval. One wing serves as a support for a person ascending from the middle to the top of the staircase, and the return of the two wings inclines to the wall. In the middle and down to the pavement, they recede from the wall with the whole staircase, about three hand-breadths, so that the bottom of the returning part is not filled up in any way, and remains altogether

open on every side. My description will make you laugh, but I hope you will find it of service.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."

"TO VASARI.

"13th Oct. 1550."

"MY DEAR GEORGE,

"As soon as Bartholomew Ammannati was arrived, I went to speak to the Pope; and seeing that he wished to lay the foundations of the sepulchres at Montorio, I made an agreement that there should be one of the masons of St Peter's. The "*Tanti cosi*," the most noble Signor Aleoti, who meddles with every thing, got hold of this and wished to send one of his own sort. In order not to get into a dispute with him who rules the winds, I kept myself apart; for being a man as fickle as themselves, I did not like to find myself engaged in any ambuscade; in short, it appears to me that the church at Florence is to be no more thought of. Return soon, and keep well. I have nothing else to say.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."

This great man was at this time nearly eighty years old.

"TO THE SAME.

"My Dear George,

"I felt great pleasure in reading your letter, by which I see you have not yet forgotten the poor old man, and that you were present at the *fête* given in celebration of the birth of another Buonarotti. I thank you for the details as much as I can; but I do not approve of such splendour, because man ought not to laugh while the world weeps. Therefore it seems to me that my nephew ought not to make so many rejoicings for a new-born infant, but reserve his merry-makings for the death of him who has lived well. Don't be astonished if I don't answer you very readily; I do so in order not to have the appearance of keeping up a correspondence. However, I say, and say it again, that if I deserved even one of all those praises you bestowed upon me in your last, I should consider that in giving you soul and body, I gave you something worth having, and that I had paid you a part of my debt. But I am every moment aware of the contrary, since I owe you more than I can pay; I am too old to be ever able to be quits with you; so have a little patience, I am entirely yours. Things here are going on untowardly.

"Michael Angelo Buonarotti."

" TO VASARI.

" My Dear George,

" God knows it was much against my will that Pope Paul the Third gave me, ten years ago, the superintendence of the erection of St Peter's at Rome; and that if they had continued to work at it as they did at first, I should have been now able to return to Florence as I wish. But funds having failed, the work slackened, and continues so at this moment, when the building is at the most difficult and fatiguing part, so that if I left it now, I should incur much disgrace: besides, it would be a sin to lose the reward of all the trouble and pain I have undergone for the love of God during these ten years. I have gone into these details in answer to your letter: I have received another from the Duke: and I was astonished to see that his lordship wrote to me with so much goodness; and I thank God and his lordship for it with all my heart.

" But I am wandering from my subject, for I have lost all memory. Writing is to me a very painful thing, because it is not my profession. The meaning of it all is to make you understand the consequences of my leaving the building and this town. That would be very

pleasing to many ill-disposed persons; but it would be the ruin of that grand edifice, and perhaps it would be abandoned and shut up forever.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."

"TO THE SAME.

"MY DEAR GEORGE,

"I can hardly write; however, I have something to tell in answer to yours. You know that Urbino, that old servant who was so faithful to me, is dead. This I consider a great favour from God, although my interests suffer from it, and I lament him much. The favour is that, since I am still alive, he has taught me how to die, not unwillingly but with eagerness. I had him with me twenty-six years, and always found him faithful and a perfectly good servant in every respect. I had made him rich; and now, when I looked upon him as the staff and repose of my old age, he has disappeared and has left me no hope except that of seeing him in heaven. God has given me a pledge of it in the most happy death of Urbino; but he knew more than dying; he took compassion on me, in leaving me in this false world with so many enemies, although the major part of

me has followed him, and nothing remains for me but infinite misery. I commend myself to you.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."

"TO VASARI.

"18th Sept. 1556.

"MY DEAR GEORGE,

"I have received the little book of Mr Cosimo Bartholi, which you sent me, and you will find inclosed my letter of thanks, which I beg you will give him also personally from me, and I commend him to you.

"I have had, these two or three last days, great inconvenience and expense to undergo; but I also felt great pleasure in visiting all the hermitages on the mountains above Spoleto:* so that I have only brought back to Rome half of myself, for one only finds real peace in woods and solitude. I have nothing else to say to you. I am satisfied in knowing that

* Nothing is more interesting than the sight of these numerous little hermitages, some of which were built by persons of an elevated rank One sees them placed in a sort of amphitheatre of wood, on a pleasant mountain, which rises above Spoleto. The high road is only divided from it by a rapid torrent: image of a tumultuous world, it roars at your feet, whilst above you peace dwells in these eternal solitudes.

you are in good health and spirits. I commend myself to you.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."

"TO CORNELIA.

"I saw yesterday that you were angry with me, but I did not know the reason; I think I have discovered it by your last letter. When you sent me the cheeses, you wrote to me to say that you would send me many other things, but that the handkerchiefs were not yet finished: and I, in order to prevent your incurring expense for that, wrote to tell you not to send any thing more, but that you should ask me for something, which I should feel great pleasure in granting; as you know and even are certain of the attachment which I had for Urbino and every thing concerning him, though he be no longer alive. As to coming to see the children or sending hither Michael Angelo, my god-son, it is necessary that I should acquaint you with my present situation. It is not convenient to send Michael Angelo, because I am without a maid-servant or any house-keeper; and besides the child is too young at present. Some accident might happen to him which would grieve me much; moreover, it is now

a month ago since the Duke of Florence did every thing for me to return to that city with very great offers. I have asked him for the time necessary to arrange my matters here, and to leave the building of St Peter's in a good train, so that I reckon upon passing all the summer at Rome. When my affairs are finished and yours about the Mount of Piety, I shall go next spring to Florence forever; for I am old, and have no more time to return to Rome. I shall pass your house; if you like to let me have Michael Angelo with me, I will keep him at Florence with more affection than the children of my nephew Leonard, in teaching him what I know his father wished him to learn of me. I received your last letter yesterday, 27th March.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."

"LETTER AND SONNET OF MICHAEL ANGELO, WRITTEN IN HIS EIGHTY-FIRST YEAR TO VASARI.

"Would to God, my dear Vasari, I could live some few years more, notwithstanding the inconveniences of old age. I know very well that you will tell me I am too old, and that it is foolish in me to write sonnets; but it is

because many people say that I am fallen into second childhood, that I have wished to do my best. I see by your letter the attachment you have for me. Know then as a certainty that I should wish my poor remains to be buried near those of my fathers, as you desire. But in leaving Rome, I should cause the ruin of the building of St Peter's, which would be a great sin and shame to me. When this great edifice is so far advanced as to prevent the possibility of its being injured by any alterations, I hope to put in execution all you propose to me, if it be not already a very blameable thing to keep in such a miserable state so many envious rivals, who wait for my departure with impatience."

The following Sonnet, annexed to this letter, is also written by his hand.

" Giunto è già 'l corso della vita mia
Con tempestoso mar per fragil barca
Al comun porto, ov' a render si varca
Conto e ragion d'ogni opra trista, e pia.
Onde l' affetuosa fantasia
Che l' arte mi fece idolo, e monarca,
Conosco or ben, quant' era d' error carca,
E quel ch' a mal suo grado ognun' desia.

Gli amorosi pensier già vani e lieti,
Che fien' or, s' a due morte mi avvicino ?
D' una so certo, e l' altra mi minaccia.
Nè pinger, nè scolpir fia più, che quieti
L' anima volta a quello amor divino,
Ch' apprese a prender noi in croce le braccia.

It is much to my regret, that I cannot produce more than three of Michael Angelo's sonnets. It appears to me very desirable, although two editions of his poems have appeared at Florence, that a new edition should be published, accompanied by a good translation, for the convenience of those who are not well acquainted with the Italian. I think, considering the scarcity of the two editions which have already appeared, that a less voluminous collection of his poetry would be received with equal satisfaction by every one. What artist is there but would exclaim with transport, " I have read the poetry of Michael Angelo !"

I will present the reader with the first and third sonnet, extracted from the collection printed twice at Florence, under the title of " The Poems of Michael Angelo Buonarotti the Elder," to distinguish them doubtless from those of his nephew Leonardo :

FIRST SONNET.

" Non ha l' ottimo artista alcun concetto
Ch' un marmo solo in se non circonscriva
Col suo soverchio, e solo a quello arriva
La man, che obbedisce all' intelletto.
Il mal ch' io fuggo, è 'l ben ch' io mi prometto,
In te, donna legiadra, altera, e diva
Tal si nasconde ; è perch' io piu non viva
Contraria ho l' arte al desiato effetto.
Amor dunque non ha, ne tua beltade,
O fortuna, o durezza, o gradi sdegno,
Del mio mal colpa, o mio destino, o sorte.
Se dentro del tuo cor, morte, e pietade,
Posti in un tempo, e che 'l mio basso ingegno
Non sappia ardendo trarne altro che morte."

THIRD SONNET.

" La forza d' un bel volto al ciel mi sprona
(Ch' altro in terra non è, che mi diletti)
E vivo ascendo tra gli spirti eletti ;
Grazia, ch' ad nom mortal raro si dona.
Si ben col suo fattor l' opra consuona,
Ch' a lui mi levo per divin concetti :
E qui vi informo i pensier tutti i diletti
Ardendo, amando pur gentil persona.

Onde, se mai da due begli occhi ìl guardo
Torcer non so, conosco in lor la luce,
Che mi mostra la via, ch' a Dìo mi guida.
E se nel lume loro acceso io ardo,
Nel nobi foco mio dolce riluce,
La gioja, che nel cielo eterna ride.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

"TO M. GEORGE VASARI.

"My Dear Master George,

"In respect to the rebuilding of St Pietro in Montorio,* as it is not the will of the Pope† to have it done, I have written nothing to you about it, thinking that you would be informed of it by your man, who is here. However, I must acquaint you with what follows, which is this: That yesterday morning, knowing that the Pope was gone to the said church, he sent for me, and I met him at the bridge on his return; and we had a very long conversation together, concerning the proposed sepulchres; and in the end, he said that he was now determined not to have the sepulchres in the Montorio, but in the church of the Florentines. He asked my opi-

* To make the chapel of the family of Del Monte.

† Julius the Third Del Monte.

nion of the design, and I agreed with him in it, because I thought by this means the church would be finished. Concerning the three letters I have received from you, my pen is not able to answer so many high matters. But if I am pleased at being in some measure what you say I am, in other respects I am not glad, except that you have a servant who is worth some regard. But I do not wonder that you, who are able to revive the dead and prolong the days of those who are alive, should teaze the half-dead to death; and, therefore to shorten my letter, I am entirely yours,

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

"Rome, August 1, 1550."

"TO COSMO THE FIRST, DUKE OF FLORENCE.

"MOST ILLUSTRIOUS LORD DUKE OF FLORENCE,

"The Florentines have long had a very great desire to build a handsome church here, in Rome, to St John. And now being the period of your most illustrious reign, they hope to be able to execute it with more convenience, and are forthwith resolved to do it; and have chosen five persons to that end, who have several times requested and prayed me to make a design for the said church. I knowing that Pope Leo

had formerly intended to have such a church, returned for answer that I would not give my attendance without licence from the Duke of Florence. But now being informed of a most gracious letter from your Highness, which I hold as an express command that I should attend to the said building, it gives me very great pleasure. I have already made several designs, amongst which the above-mentioned committee have selected one * which will be sent to your Highness; and which will be put in execution, if it is approved of by you. I greatly lament that, from my great age and infirmity, I am not able to promise much help from myself in the building. But for your Highness, I shall with my whole heart assist as far as I am able; and with this I wish you well.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BONAROTTI. Rome."

"TO MASTER A. M. BENEDETTO VARCHI.†

"M. Benedetto, that you may know that I have received your little book as I have, I shall answer some of your questions according to

* The model in wood was in St John's at Florence; but has now perished.

† Benedetto Varchi, or da Montevarchi, a Florentine, was one of the most learned and elegant writers of his age. As a sup-

your desire, although very ignorant of the matter. I say then that it seems to me that the picture which approaches most to real *relievo* is the best picture. And that a *basso-relievo* that appears most like a picture is to be held the worst.

Therefore, it seems to me that sculpture had been the lamp to the picture; and that the difference between the one and the other is as the sun to the moon. But after having read your little book, wherein you say that speaking philosophically, those things that aim at the same end are on a par or the same thing, I changed my opinion, and say that if greater judgment, and difficulty, fatigue and impediments do not give greater value, then painting and sculpture are on a par. And if it is so esteemed, no painter ought to make less estimation of sculpture than of painting; and a similar opinion

porter of the Strozzi, he was enrolled among the exiles in 1537: and spent many years in Venice, Padua, and Bologna, in habits of the strictest intimacy with the most illustrious characters of each place. Recalled by Cosmo through the mediation of Luca Martini in 1542, he was taken into that Duke's service; and employed in writing his intended history. Of the greatest integrity, and with excellent dispositions, he every way fulfilled the expectations of his prince, by inviting his subjects to the study of letters, and promoting a knowledge of literature, and the purity of the Tuscan language throughout Italy.

ought to be entertained by the sculptor of the painter. I understand by sculpture whatever is done by means of relief; for what is done mechanically, by means of the hands, is the same in each. It is enough that the one and the other proceed from the same degree of genius, so that sculpture and painting ought (if they can) to be at peace together, and leave off so many disputes, because it takes up more of their time than it would require to do their several tasks.

"He who writes that painting is more noble than sculpture, understands so little of the subject he writes about, that my servant would have written better. An infinite number of things yet unsaid may be written upon these sciences; but, as I observed before, it takes up too much time, and I have but little, because I am not only an old man, but may almost be numbered with the dead; therefore, I pray you to excuse me. I commend myself to you; and thank you as well as I can for the too great honour you do me, which is not fitting to me.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."*

* It is curious that Michael Angelo, who alone was competent to judge as practising both arts, alone declines giving an opinion on the subject. Thus modesty keeps pace with knowledge. He appears to have been, in all respects, a wise and good man.

" TO SIGNOR BENEDETTO VARCHI.

" Florence, February 12, 1547.

" You ask me, sir, what is my opinion on the pre-eminence of painting and sculpture. I should not wish to refuse you the first request you ever made me : but although I am certainly much inclined to give you that satisfaction, I fear I shall remain much beneath my subject. I will begin by telling you, that when I was at Rome, there was a wager on the same subject between two courtiers of the Cardinal Farnese, nephew of Paul the Third, and that I was chosen to be umpire in the dispute : being more embarrassed then than at writing you this letter, I went to the divine Michael Angelo, in order that he, being very skilful in those two arts, might give me his opinion. He answered me smiling : ' Sculpture and Painting have one goal, at which those who aim at it, have an equal difficulty in arriving.' I could not learn any thing more from him.

" I swear to you, that had I feared to incur your contempt, I had resolved to send you a sheet of blank paper, in order that you, who are full of wisdom, might there write your own

opinion, as being a better judge than myself and the rest of us artists. But since you wish me to amuse you or give you something to laugh at, I will tell you what I think, as a proof of my feelings while labouring in such an art. The idea is that an artist, whatever be his profession, is so much the nearer the first cause as he approaches to greater perfection in nature, like those who assist nature herself, for her preservation, by a study or science as intellectual as manual. According to this we then say that an art which has attained this object, is more perfect than another. Thus architecture takes the precedence over sculpture and painting, because it has attained the end proposed, which is to ornament and assist nature.

"I do not promise you to speak of sculpture, because it would raise up a controversy which would last as long as that of the Black and Grey Monks of Conception; besides I have excited envy; so I should finish by playing high. Let us then speak of my own art, of its excellence and perfection. I will first say that all things which are learned easily, are thought less capable of perfection.

"That you may judge for yourself, understand what I mean; take, if you please, a ball of

fat earth, make of it a head, an animal, or any thing else; in doing this, you will want neither colours, lights, nor shades. After you have given form to any object, take some paper, draw it with a pencil or something; then begin to shade it, to look out for the half-tints, to place the lights with their different degrees of force or delicacy: you will be able to judge which is the best and the easiest of these two arts; and that which you find the easiest will be the least perfect. It is very difficult in painting, to design well and shade well at the same time; for one often sees artists who make perfect contours and spoil them in the shading; while others design ill, and understand in a marvellous degree the effect of light and shade. No one can exercise our art if he has not a perfect notion of design and an excellent judgment; because one makes, in a place which only presents a fathom of extent or surface, a figure which viewed in fore-shortening, has six; this art does even more, it gives all bodies a living and round appearance, or whatever shape they may be of, upon a smooth, flat surface, which is certainly a most extraordinary thing; whilst sculpture has all its effects within itself, and is just as it appears.

"Besides the advantages painting possesses in

giving all the expression of the passions, which sculpture also has, as far as features go, it gives them the proper colour, which is singularly serviceable in characterising: it presents a perfect imitation of breath, water, winds, tempests, rain, clouds, hail, snow, ice, thunder and lightning, night, twilight, moonlight, the shining of the stars, light, the different sorts of air, whether pure or loaded with vapour, the heat more or less great of the sun or a fire, the degrees (strong or slight) of natural or artificial light, and finally the sun itself in all its splendour.

"The wisdom or folly of painting is formed in the head; and this fine art receives either its life or death there. It gives both with their different degrees. The brilliant freshness of colours, of youth, and health: the condition more or less languishing of mortals: their different maladies, with the exterior symptoms; wounds from which the blood yet flows, or from which it has ceased to do so; death just come, or less recent; the gentle appearance of fish living in limpid water; the delicacy of flowers, and their infinite shades; those not less variegated of birds and other living things; the colour of the hair and beard, waving in the zephyrs or wild winds, or their curls tight and

compact, emblems of force: how can a sculptor, let him be as skilful as he will, do all this with stone or marble? Alas, my dear Varchi, what have you made me say? You have drawn me into an abyss from which I shall not be able to extricate myself to-morrow; for I have comprehended in the art of painting all that nature does, and with which one can give life and colour. Why have I not yet mentioned divine perspective, and all its marvellous effects, which deceive the sight, and mislead it in a thousand ways? Do me, in sculpture, a figure which, like that in the fable of the Satyr and the Countryman, renders the smoke of the soup which the latter wishes to eat with his spoon, and the breath which proceeds from his mouth to cool the meat he is swallowing. But let us leave all that.

"Painting employs fresco, water and oil colours, three methods differing in the process, but tending to the same end. If a painter does not design well or colours ill, he has lost his time. If a good colourist and a bad designer, the end he proposes is lost. If he has acquired these two essential parts of his art, and is not a good architect, he cannot do a regular perspective, because the plane and profile produce

height, breadth, and foreshortening with their lines. Then he has to paint portraits capable of deceiving the eye, as we have seen in our day in the portrait of Pope Paul the Third, painted by Titian, which, being placed for some time in the sun upon a terrace, was considered alive by the passers-by, who bowed to it: which has never happened in sculpture.

" In fine, the least part of painting has great difficulties ; whence it proceeds that the greatest geniuses always find something to learn, of which they were ignorant. In thinking of that, I have sometimes said to myself, that if I had employed the study, time, and application which I had employed upon this art, and that to little purpose, on any other science, I think that, unless I am much mistaken, I should have been exalted, canonized, and should never die.

" I forgot to say that I have paid great attention to the flight of armies in ancient bas-reliefs, and their movements, &c.; but I could never find the sweat, the foam upon the soldiers' lips, the glittering of their arms, nor the horses' hair, nor the reflection of these different bodies, which sculpture can no more express, than it can represent silk, velvet, gold, silver, and the glittering of precious stones.

"You will excuse me if I have not satisfied you; it is my pen you must blame, for I am not so well accustomed to the use of it as of the pencil. I own I could have finished a picture sooner than I have this letter. Farewell, and love me.—Your

"GEORGE VASARI D'AREZZO."

"MOST REVEREND SIR,

"When a plan consists of different parts, all those which are of the same sort of quality and quantity ought to be ornamented in the same fashion and manner: it is the same too in their meetings, or when opposite each other. But when the plan differs entirely in form, then it is not only permitted, but altogether necessary, that the ornaments should differ, and the same of their meetings: The middle ones are always open, and may be arranged as you please.

"As the nose, which is in the middle of the face, has nothing in common with either eye, whilst one hand must be like the other, and one eye like the other, on account of the sides and correspondences, so it is certain that the

parts of architecture answer to the members of the human body. He who has not been, or is not a good master of figures, and above all of anatomy, cannot understand any thing of this.

"MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI."

"TO M. GIOVANNI FRANCESCO GRIMANI.

"Rome, 26th July, 1543."

"I went to sup last night at Treio, a garden of M. Agabito Belluomo. I experienced there three pleasures at once which, like the three Graces, caused me much content and satisfaction: I saw, heard, and bathed, and then I drank some of that beautiful water, which is so clear and pure, that it really seemed a virgin-spring: and, indeed, by that name it is called. I gave many praises to the young girl, who showed the sources of this spring to some soldiers, whose labours afterwards procured an increased supply of it. It seemed to me that she deserved that she should give name to it, and that above the fountain there ought to be placed a statue of her showing the springs. But I praised Agrippa much more, who, besides many other benefits conferred on the Roman people, and after having rebuilt the Appian, Arian, and Martian aqueducts, now

destroyed and fallen into ruins, conducted this maiden stream to Rome, and this is the only one of all of them that remains entire. It comes to Rome, it seems, for many useful purposes, and gives a charm to the gardens through which it passes on its way. It, in its turn, feels the effects of weakness and time; a great part of it is already destroyed, although it would be possible to repair it. I felt great sorrow at seeing that so many other good and beautiful streams, which formerly reached nearly to Rome, are at present abandoned. Where are now the Arian, the Appian, the Claudian, the Tiepolan, the Julian, the Augustan, and the rest? People will say that it is enough for us moderns to see the marvellous remains of the old aqueducts. I doubt whether they will ever be restored, I will not say to their primitive beauty, but repaired so as to convey the blessings of these wholesome waters.

"They have however at Rome many ingenious methods of making fountains: art is there mingled with nature, and no one can determine to which of the two the works belong. One great ornament to them is, that the builders use a soft, sandy, spongy stone, which is brought from Tivoli; formed by the water, it again returns to its service. There is great

variety in the formation of these fountains; the waters dance about them in a thousand such charming shapes, that one must see and not describe them.

"Our supper was most pleasant. The guests being select prolonged the sweetness of our most pleasing conversation. We agreed with that Platonic philosopher, that a meal made with so much delight is a great refreshment for the fatigue both of mind and body; it keeps up friendship, calls forth confidence, and scatters life and joy through the flowers with which it is crowned. It is in short the nest of the Graces and the solace of life. As to the number of guests, it ought to be, according to Varro, either that of the Graces, or at any rate not to exceed that of the Muses. We took care not to go beyond the prescribed number; we were between the Muses and the Graces.

"I will tell you that Michael Angelo was of the party. He said, at the repast of which he was the ornament, that he did not envy Lucullus, because, whereas the latter supped with Apollo, Apollo came to sup with him; but it was with Apollo darting his arrows, who, as the Aulians painted him, held the Graces in his right hand, and his arrows in his

left: so that I thought myself wounded many times.

"Notwithstanding all this, our happiness seemed imperfect, because you were not with us: however, you were the subject of conversation, and all wished you well; but, like Philip, who having received three joyful pieces of intelligence in one day, prayed the Gods to mingle some misfortune with so many benefits to temper his happiness, so we were obliged, in the midst of all our joy, to feel sorrow at your absence.

"I have not been able to stop my pen: it was necessary to write, whether for the purpose of recalling me to your memory and making you taste some pleasure, or to let you know that every good mind loves and honours you. I would say more, but modesty forbids me. Be happy.

"CLAUDIO TOLOMEI."

HONOURS PAID TO M. ANGELO AT HIS DEATH.

The principal painters, sculptors, and artists of the Academy of Florence, having been assembled by their vice-president, Don Vincent Borghini, as soon as the death of Michael

Angelo was announced to them, they deliberated, before separating, upon employing all their means to pay deserved honour to the memory of their chief; and the Vice-President was requested to inform Cosmo the First of it immediately, which he did in the following terms:—

"The Academy of painters and sculptors have determined among themselves, with your most illustrious Excellency's approbation, to raise a monument in honour of the memory of Michael Angelo Buonarotti, in some place to be hereafter fixed upon; whether it be as a debt generally owing to the greatest talents which perhaps ever existed, or as due from each particular Academician, and for the benefit of the country at large, or whether it be for the great assistance painting, sculpture, and architecture have received from the perfection and invention of his works: in fact, it is indispensably necessary that they should shew themselves desirous of doing the utmost to render him the homage due to his transcendant merit.

"The Academicians lay open to your most illustrious Excellency what their wish is; and seek, as in their proper refuge, the assistance and sure help which they shall find in you.

Intreated by them, and obliged (in my person) for having been continued for another year in the situation of vice-president of their society by your most illustrious Excellency, I will add that their idea appears to me as fine as honourable, and conceived by artists full of talents and gratitude; but knowing full well how your most illustrious Excellency delights in honouring the fine arts, I will say, that you are to them a tranquil and safe harbour; that you are the only protector of genius of the age; and that you even surpass in this respect your ancestors, who however overwhelmed with extraordinary favours those who excelled in these professions. It was by the order of Lorenzo, surnamed the Magnificent, that Giotto, who has been dead so many years, was honoured with a statue; that brother Philip had a fine tomb of marble in the same church of St John, and all this at his own expense. Many others also received, on divers occasions, rewards and very great honours. Moved by all these considerations, I have taken the liberty of recommending to your most illustrious Excellency the request which this Academy makes you, of enabling them to honour the great talents of Michael Angelo, pupil and particular follower

of the school of Lorenzo the Magnificent; whereby the Academicians will be rendered happy; the satisfaction of the public will be universal; the professors of the fine arts will be excited, by the honours paid to the greatest of them, to surpass themselves, and all Italy will learn that the greatness of soul of your most illustrious Excellency equals its goodness. May God preserve your Highness for many happy years, for the happiness of his people and the support of genius!"

ANSWER OF THE DUKE OF FLORENCE.

"Our Most Dear Vice-President,

"The alacrity with which the Academy determined upon honouring the memory of Michael Angelo Buonarotti, passed from this life to a better, has given us great consolation after the death of a man so rare; we not only grant all it has requested of us by a memorial it has presented to us for the ordering of the funeral obsequies of Michael Angelo, but also that his remains may be transplanted from Rome to Florence, since, as far as we can learn, this was his last wish. What we now write to the Academy is only to animate it to celebrate in

every way the talents of so great a man. God send you content!"

Michael Angelo had been some days dead, when his body was secretly carried off, in the night, from the church of the Holy Apostles, at Rome, by the care of his nephew, who had travelled post to that city. He was put in his coffin into a bale supposed to contain only merchandize. In this manner the body arrived at Florence, the 11th of March.

LETTER OR PETITION FROM THE ACADEMY TO THE DUKE OF FLORENCE.

"Most Illustrious, &c. &c.

"The Academy of Painting created by the grace and favour of your most illustrious Excellency, having learnt with what zeal and affection your Excellency has conveyed, by means of your agent at Rome, the body of Michael Angelo Buonarotti to Florence, has unanimously resolved, in open assembly, to celebrate his obsequies in the best manner possible.

"But, knowing that your illustrious Excellency was as much respected by Michael Angelo, as your Excellency loved him, the

Academy intreats that it may please you, in your goodness and infinite liberality, to grant; first, that the said obsequies may be celebrated in the church of St Lorenzo, built by your ancestors, and in which Michael Angelo has done such fine works, both in sculpture and architecture, and near which your Excellency designs building an edifice, which like a nest, may unite the Academy and a continual study of architecture, sculpture, and painting.

"Secondly, the professors of this Academy intreat your Excellency to charge M. Benedetto Varchi, not only to compose the funeral sermon, but to preach it himself, as he most readily promised us at our entreaty, provided always that it meet with your most illustrious Excellency's approbation.

"Thirdly, we intreat that you may please, with the same goodness and liberality, to recollect every thing which may be necessary for them to celebrate the said obsequies, besides what we ourselves may be able to provide, which is but little.

"Each of these heads has been treated of in presence of, and with the consent of Don Vincentio Borghini, Prior of the *Innocents*, Vice-President of your most illustrious Excellency

in the Academy and Society of Drawing, which, &c. &c.

ANSWER OF THE GRAND DUKE TO THE ABOVE

"Our Dear Friends,

"We feel much pleasure in granting a full and entire satisfaction to your requests, through the great affection we have for the rare perfection of the talents of Michael Angelo Buonarotti, and for all people of your profession. So do all that depends upon you, in the execution of what you have resolved upon for his funeral; as for us, we will not fail to supply you with every necessary: we have already written to Signor Benedetto Varchi for his discourse; and to M. Borghini as to the other things, which we have exactly remembered. Farewell!"

LETTER FROM THE GRAND DUKE TO BENEDETTO VARCHI.

"Sir,

"Our well-beloved Benedetto Varchi, the affection we have for Michael Angelo and for his great talents, makes us wish that his memory may be honoured and celebrated in every possible way. So it would please us, if through attach-

ment to our person, you would take the trouble of writing the funeral sermon to be pronounced on the day of the burial, according to the arrangements of the Deputies of the Academy.* It will appear finer to us, if you pronounce it yourself. Farewell!"

* The Deputies of the Academy to superintend the funeral, were Angelo Bronzino and Georgio Vasari, painters; Benvenuto Cellini and Bartholomew Ammanati, sculptors. But all the artists, young and old, disputed for the envied honour of assisting at these magnificent obsequies, celebrated 14th July 1564, in the same chapel of St Lorenzo, in which those of the royal family of Florence, and so many other sovereigns of Europe, have been celebrated. The sarcophagus where Michael Angelo was buried, was lately opened, and he was found dressed in a green velvet wrapping-gown, with a green velvet cap on his head, and velvet slippers, and the hands lying across the breast, but the body was shrunk up and wasted to nothing.

CHAPTER XXVII.

VASARI VISITS TITIAN—HIS LATTER WORKS—HIS DEATH. —GENERAL REMARKS ON THE VENETIAN SCHOOL.

In the year 1566, Vasari, who afterwards wrote the life of Titian, took a journey to Venice, and paid a visit to the great painter. He found him grown very old, being then in the eighty-sixth year of his age: but still with his pencil in his hand, and diligently at work. Vasari expresses the great pleasure he received from seeing his works; and also from his conversation. He was likewise introduced by Titian to M. Gran Maria Verdezetti, a young Venetian gentleman of extraordinary abilities, and an excellent painter of landscapes, in which he had been instructed by Titian, who behaved to him like a father. He had two pictures by Titian in two niches, one an Apollo, the other a Diana.

"I know," says Dolce, "that few of the lower rank can boast the having any portrait or other picture by Titian. Our Titian (as he calls him) is then in painting divine and unequalled; nor ought Apelles himself, were he alive, to disdain to do him honour. But, besides his wonderful excellence in painting, he has many other qualities worthy of the highest praise. In the first place, he is extremely modest, never wounding invidiously any painter's character; but speaking honourably of every one who deserves it. He also is a most elegant speaker, of a most perfect genius and judgment in all things; of a gentle and placid temper, very affable, and of the most delicate manners; insomuch that whoever once approaches him must always love him."

This is the character given of Titian by a cotemporary and a friend.

In the year 1574, Titian being then in the ninety-fourth year of his age, Henry the Third came from Poland (where he had been King) to take possession of the Throne of France, after the death of his brother Charles the Ninth: but he could not pass through Venice, without visiting Titian, whose praises were sung by all the poets of his time.

Titian now having adorned not only Venice but all Italy and other parts of the world with

works of the highest order, merits to be noticed and admired by all artists ; and in many parts of the art is the most excellent model for imitation, and worthy of infinite praise. His name will remain for ever distinguished among the most illustrious men.

The talents of this eminent painter were permitted a career of unusual length ; and he continued the exercise of his art until the year 1576, having lived to the age of ninety-six years, when he died of the Plague.

Towards the close of so long a life it may be reasonably imagined that his works exhibited the infirmities of old age, and that his last works were little more than the feeble repetitions of his former ones. He never had any competitors in Venice that ought to have given him either jealousy or disturbance : and those few who pretended to it he easily overcame by his excellence in the art, as well as by having all the nobility and the wits on his side. His pictures were paid for at what rates he pleased, so that he lived in ease and affluence ; and being thus amply provided for, he had no occasion to work in his latter years, except for his own amusement and to pass the time away, but not so as to lessen by works of marked and deplorable inferiority the high reputation he had earned in his better days.

"Titian (says Mengs) ever sought truth, but not after the same manner as Raphael, who represented the mind, the sentiments and the passions, in short, the inward man: whereas Titian sought truth only in material objects, not only in the human form but in all other objects of sight. To this he applied his chief attention; more especially in respect to colour, and the particular surface of whatever he imitated. The flesh in his pictures is so exact a representation, that it appears to contain blood, humidity, muscles, and veins; and has the strongest appearance of truth. This is, therefore, the part we ought to study in him: and these qualities are to be found in all his works, not only in the most excellent, but also in those that are of an inferior order."

"Titian (continues Mengs) had no part of design, except that copied from individual nature, which he imitated well; so that when he found beauty in his model, he gave it in his work, as he possessed a great justness of the eye. And this was the case with most of the painters of that time at Venice; for had they known how to select beauty as well as Raphael, all might have been like him perfect in designing.

"Titian's practice was always to paint every

thing from nature; landscapes, the human figure, whether clothed or naked; and from this he acquired a true and essential knowledge. The custom of taking portraits served and assisted as a most advantageous exercise, because by this practice he was obliged to imitate with exactness all sorts of things (either minute or grand) and particularly draperies of rich, forcible and vivid colours, so that he was of necessity required to study the means to assimilate and unite all those different objects. And since he observed that such colours or objects as are agreeable in nature, often had a bad effect in painting, he saw there was no other way than to endeavour to imitate nature to perfection. Accordingly, we find that Titian, by his exact and just eye, great practice and close imitation, could make all things in harmony.

"The colours of the Iris or prism have a perfect harmony all together; but if either the red, the blue, or the yellow be taken away, the harmony is totally destroyed. It is the very same in respect to a picture: should it be wanting in the due proportion of each of those colours, it will be deficient in harmony. The reason is, that the true concordance consists only in the equilibrium of the three principal

colours, the red, blue, and yellow. Rubens introduced, in his paintings, much of these three colours; but he did not know the just balance like Titian, who felt within himself the rules of the most exact harmony, which pervades all his works,—and therefore he must be ranked as the most perfect colourist that has ever been.

"Titian had very little of the *ideal* in design. Of *chiaro-scuro* he had sufficient perception to understand it in nature, not however so much as Correggio; nor do we find it so striking nor so general in his works. In local colouring he had a much clearer idea, well understanding the character and degrees of colour, as also the proper place in which to apply them: for there is science required even in placing a red cloth in preference to a blue one, &c. which is not so trivial or so easy as is imagined: but this is what Titian understood in the highest perfection. A perception of the harmony of colours is not discovered in nature, if it be not first comprehended in the imagination."

Mengs observes, "that Raphael had the taste for expression, Correggio that of pleasing, and Titian that of truth. Each of these made his choice according to the habits of his mind; but as all three of these painters sought for

truth, they have very often met in each other's excellences, as nature who was their guide possessed them all. Any one of these excellences alone is sufficient in itself to occupy the limited powers of the greatest artist. But it sometimes happens that by imitating nature, the painter will seize an excellence which might not have been the object of his search, when it does not interfere with his first principle. From whence it comes that Raphael has sometimes painted as pleasing subjects as Correggio, and with as much truth as Titian; Correggio sometimes excels in expression almost as much as Raphael, and is as true as Titian: and by turns, Titian has designed like Raphael and pleased like Correggio. But I have thought it well to determine the taste of each painter in conformity to his principal excellence, as it is rather rare to find in their respective works all those excellences together for which each individual was distinguished."

The Venetian painters, who fixed the style of their countrymen, were most certainly Giorgione and Titian. Giorgione took the hint of that fine manner of colouring which, as we observed before, became the distinguished characteristic of the Venetian school, from Leonardo da Vinci, the Florentine; and Titian carried it to the

greatest possible perfection; but Titian adopted this search into colouring at an early period of life, and (comparatively speaking) knew but little of any thing else that might tempt him into other pursuits; he gave up almost his whole time to improving colouring to the utmost perfection it was capable of receiving: therefore, if Titian is more remarkable as a colourist than as a draftsman, the climate had nothing to do with it. And Michael Angelo, like the great and judicious artist that he was, did not ascribe Titian's excellence in colouring or his defects in other parts to any particular direction of genius which might enable him to succeed in any one part of the art more than in another: no, he well knew that the acquisition of the art, in the whole together, or in the several parts and divisions of it, will always, in the hands of a man properly qualified, bear a just proportion to the application made, and to the advantages of study enjoyed. After praising Titian's colouring, his remark upon him is, "It is a misfortune that the painters of Venice have not a better manner of study."

At the same time, Giorgione who was a little anterior to Titian founded a school of painting at Venice, which school made great progress from the opportunities they had of painting

large *façades* and saloons. As Titian, by living at Venice, had not the facility of examining ancient works, he could not fundamentally acquire a great style like Michael Angelo; and for that reason he did not bestow on his delineation of forms all that attention which they merited, and applied himself more to the appearance of truth, which depended on the colours of the body, and arrived in that part by continual exercise of painting and copying nature, to such excellence that he never has been equalled: and what contributed much to this, was the vanity of the Venetian gentry, who wished to be painted by him or to have from his hand those exquisite female figures.

Contemporary with Titian, the Duke of Mantua employed Mantegna, who established at Modena the first academy that had been in Italy, from which came Bianchi, the master of Antonio Allegri, named Correggio.

From the foundation of the Venetian school, a mode of proceeding was adopted, which, though well calculated to give the painter a greater promptness of execution, a more commanding dexterity of hand, and a more chaste and lively colouring than is to be found in the artists of the Roman or Florentine schools, was also the means of introducing a want of

correctness in their compositions and a neglect of purity in their outlines. Their method was to paint every thing without the preparation of a drawing; whereas the Roman and Florentine painters never introduced a figure, of which they had not studied and prepared a model or cartoon. Following the system of his countrymen, Titian painted immediately from nature; and possessed of a correct eye, attuned to the harmony of effect, he acquired a style of colouring perfectly conformable to truth. Satisfied with this identity of imitation, he was little sensible of the select beauty of form or the adaptation of that characteristic expression, so essential to the higher order of historic painting. In his works of that description, if we look for the fidelity of the historian, he will be found, like other artists of his country, little scrupulous in point of accuracy. He neither presents us with the precise locality of the scene, the strict propriety of the costume, nor the accessories best suited to the subject; attributes so estimable in the works of those painters who consulted the best models of antiquity.

Apelles was esteemed to excel in colouring. He is said to have used a warmth of colouring similar (by what we may judge) to that of

Titian. The ancients, if they did not excel in beautiful colouring, yet had the advantage of great durability, according to the opinion of Plutarch. "Raphael and Titian" says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "seem to have looked at nature for different purposes; they both had the power of extending their view to the whole; but one looked for general effect produced by form, the other as produced by colour. We cannot refuse to Titian the merit of attending to the general form of his object, as well as to colour; but his deficiency, at least when he is compared with Raphael, lay in not possessing the power, like him, of correcting the form of his model by any general idea of beauty in his own mind."

As Titian contented himself with a faithful representation of nature, his forms were fine when he found them in his model. If like Raphael, he had been inspired with the genuine love of the beautiful, it might have led him to have courted it in selected nature or in her more attractive charms to be found in the polished graces of the *antique:* the purity of his design thus united with the enchanting magic of his colouring would have stamped him the most accomplished painter that the art has produced. But although Titian cannot with propriety be placed among those artists who have

distinguished themselves by the excellence of their choice and the refinement of their expression, he is not altogether wanting in grandeur or dignity. Like Michael Angelo, he occasionally exaggerated or went beyond his model, but it was rather to render it more tender and fleshy, than like Buonarotti to render it more vigorous and muscular. A general feeling for colour rather than a correct principle of composition induced him to make prominent the most beautiful parts of his figures, as affording the finest masses and the boldest relief. His female figures and children are preferable to those of his men: and he has given them an air of *naïveté* and ease which, though not absolutely grace, is nearly allied to it; and it is generally supposed that N. Pousin and the sculptor Fiamingo, who excelled in the representation of infantine beauty, formed their idea of it by contemplating the works of Titian.

As a colourist, Titian holds an unrivalled dominion over every competitor. No painter has viewed nature with so chaste an eye; and to none were the tender blandishments of her charms more confidentially communicated. In his pictures the tones are so subtlely melted as to leave no intimation of the colours which were on his pallet; and it is perhaps in that respect

that his system of colouring differs so materially from that of Rubens, who was accustomed to place his colours one near the other, with a slight blending of the tints. He observed, that in nature every object offered a particular surface or character, transparent, opaque, rude, or polished; and that these objects differed in the strength of their tints and the depth of their shadows. It was in this diversity, that he found the generality and perfection of his art. Hence, as Mengs remarks, in imitating nature he took the principal for the whole, and represented his fleshy tones, chiefly composed of demitints, totally by demitints, and divested of demitints those passages in which few were discernible in nature. By these means he arrived at an indescribable perfection of colouring, which approaches to illusion.

In invention and composition he confined himself to a representation of what appeared to him to be naturally necessary to the subject: and this strict adherence to individuality prompted him to introduce into his historical pictures, instead of ideal characters analogous to the subject, heads designed from life, with a precision which gave to the most interesting subjects of history the formality of portraiture.

That he was capable of occasionally ventur-

ing beyond this boundary, he has given proof in his fine picture of St Pietro Martire, in which his friend and admirer Algarotti asserts, that the most fastidious critic cannot find the shadow of defect. The composition of this celebrated picture is admirable; and though composed of very few figures, they are spiritedly designed, full of action, and marked with a grandeur seldom found in the works of this artist. As a painter of portraits, Titian is indisputably entitled to the highest rank. To the nobleness and simplicity of character which he always gave them, he added what Sir Joshua Reynolds calls "a senatorial dignity," a natural and unaffected air, which distinguishes his personages from those of every other artist; and to his transcendant excellence in this branch, he is indebted for a great portion of his fame.

To the celebrity of Titian as a painter of history and portraits, is to be added his excellence in landscape-painting. Whether it is predominant or introduced as an accessory, it is always treated by him in the grandest and most picturesque style. Such is the admirable background of his famous picture of St Pietro Martire, than which it would be difficult to find in the whole range of art a more sublime and

impressive accompaniment, so artfully conducive to the terrific effect of the subject.

"FROM FILIPPO BALDINUCCI TO SIGNOR MARCHESE SENATOR VINCENZIO CAPPONI.

"It is necessary that every one who desires to become a judge of a painter's style should have seen a great many of the pictures of the master whose paintings he wishes to be able to criticise, that he may have fully impressed upon his mind all his methods: for it is not enough to be able to judge of it by one style, as we may exemplify in the case of hand-writing, in which there is always a similitude, though every one forms his characters in a manner peculiar to himself, and always different in some respects from that of any other person, and therefore it is always easily known by persons accustomed to the hand-writing of any particular individual, because they can compare it with the other writings executed by the same hand, word by word, and letter by letter. But in painting this is not the case, because every work and every part of the work, if it is not a copy, is always different from the others, because there are continual diversities in all

natural objects, in the ideas of the painter, the view of the figure, and its parts, &c.

"Therefore the critic must observe every method of working which was familiar to the painter, and his usual habits of finishing. For example, some lay on the genuine colours without confounding one with the other, a thing which may always be observed in the tints of Titian. Others manage quite in a contrary manner, as Correggio, who laid on his marvellous tints in such a manner that if you did not know the labour, you would imagine it was done in a breath, soft, smooth, varnished and finished without any crudeness or rawness of the colouring, and so highly relieved that one would almost say it was nature itself. Old Palma and Lorenzo Lotto have laid on their colours as in fresco, and then finished their pictures as Geo. Bellini has done, first putting in and loading the outline, and then softening it off in the manner of Titian and Giorgione. Others, like Tintoretto, have laid on their virgin tints as fresh as the foregoing, but have proceeded with such a boldness that it has a prodigious effect. Others, as Paul Veronese, have laid on their virgin colours perfectly fresh, so that they have a clearness peculiar to themselves, to which is added an admirable facility

which is easily perceived by a learned eye. In Bassano there are such striking faults, or as we say, so many errors that they only show his intention and nothing more.

" But after having spoken so much about the manner of laying on the colours, still we have not made much progress.

" All those painters have had peculiarities of their own, not only in colouring, but in the airs of the head, the drapery, and in doing the hair, because all these things depend on certain niceties of particular taste.

"Thus it would happen, that ten painters at the same time making the portrait of a young man, every one having the very same object to draw from, with the same hair, and the same drapery, yet they would do it with different degrees of softness or hardness, each varying from the other in a style peculiar to his own manner, as in the beard for instance, which is sometimes marked only as a stain or blemish, and which some flourish or draw as if in profile. But this is rarely or never seen in the works of Titian, Bassano, or Tintoretto, where we perceive beautiful stains and specks, as also in the works of Veronese."*

* The example of hand-writing appears directly contrary to the opinion of Baldinucci, as it displays perfectly the manner of judging

The Roman school never had the practice of good colouring. That of Lombardy possessed it a little better, but the Venetian school excelled in it. This has arisen from their practice. The Venetians practised much the painting of portraits, which gave them the opportunity of learning the art from nature; and of studying its great variety; because those who were portrayed wished to be painted in their own garments; and for that reason the painter was obliged to imitate a great variety of things, such

of painting, because whoever has seen any one's hand-writing often is able, without comparing word with word, or the different formation of the letters, to decide at once that it is the hand-writing of the same person. Thus, on seeing a picture by any painter, whoever has seen many pictures by the same master, is able (without thinking a moment) to pronounce the name of the painter: as he who is more used to one hand-writing than another, because he has seen it oftener than any other, can more easily and more surely decide who was the writer. Thus, for example, whoever has seen more of Titian's paintings than those of any other master, will know, with more ease and certainty, a picture by this most excellent master. And as it is not necessary to be able to know who has written a paper that we should be able to have written well ourselves, but merely being used to see the writing, one who writes badly, or even hardly know how to write at all, will yet be able to ascertain the hand that has written a paper.

Therefore, a person who knows nothing of painting, but has been very much used to look at paintings, and has seen with reflection and taste, and delight, many pictures by the same master, will know them better than another who has only seen one or two of his paintings, especially if he be not gifted with a great memory.

as velvet, satin, cloth, linen, gems, &c., and they left not these to be neglected by the genius of the artist, whom they wished to do it well, nor would they excuse him, if he did not perform it.

The amateurs seeing the things so well imitated, accustomed themselves to that taste of painting: and to please them, it was necessary that the painter should make his portrait someway striking, and that he should also make it various and rich, in order that they might see the portrait in all respects exactly like themselves. In Rome, where the ancient taste predominated, they made little account of that variety, and endeavoured to make things with the greatest simplicity possible. The amateurs sought for the most heroical subjects in which variety is hurtful: from their infancy they learned these maxims, and accustomed themselves to a taste for colouring which is not so various or so true as the first or Venetian style.

ILLUSTRATIONS

OF THE

LIFE AND WORKS OF TITIAN,

FROM

RIDOLFI, TICOZZI, AND OTHERS.

ILLUSTRATIONS, &c.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BIRTH OF TITIAN VECELLI, AND HIS INCLINATION FOR PAINTING—SENT BY HIS FATHER TO VENICE, TO LEARN THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ART UNDER SEBASTIAN ZUCCATI, AND THE BROTHERS GENTILE AND JOHN BELLINO — HIS FIRST WORKS — HE SOON ABANDONS THE MANNER OF HIS MASTER JOHN, AND PAINTS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH GIORGIONE, THE FRONT OF THE FONDACO DE' TEDESCHI.

TITIAN was born in the Pieve (or parish) of Cadore, in the year 1477.* He was the son of Gregory, of the noble family of Vecelli,† and Lucia, a Venetian citizen; and according to

* All the most authentic documents, and all writers, with the exception of Vasari, who was never very scrupulous as to dates, fix his birth in 1477; the latter in 1480.

† Appendix (No. 1) contains the genealogical table of the family Vecelli. The name Vecelli is supposed to be derived from one

the civil condition of his family, was destined by his father to the study of letters. But quickly perceiving his wonderful inclination for pictures, and an image of the Virgin which the boy had coloured with the juice of flowers being considered by every body as a prodigious performance, his father determined on sending him, at the age of nine, to his uncle Antonio at Venice, * for the purpose of having him instructed in the principles of painting. This

Guecello, who, in the year 1321, was Governor of Cadore for Guecellio da Camino, the then Grand Signior of the province. Cæsar Vecelli, in his book entitled "*Degli Abati Antichi e Moderni*," speaks of Gregory Vecelli, father of Titian, in the following terms: "What shall I say of Gregory, Titian's father? He was of the most excellent disposition and singular experience; so that the goodness of his heart was in no way inferior to the sublimity of his intellect."

* Antonio, Titian's uncle on his father's side, lived at Venice in the house of his father-in-law, Giacomo Coltrini, a Brescian engineer in the service of the Republic. Ridolfi, the anonymous author of a life of Titian, and Liruti, affirm that he was sent to an uncle on the mother's side. But one ought to prefer the testimony of Dolce, who, besides living in strict intimacy with Titian, published, under the eye of the latter, his *Dialogue on Painting*, in which he says (speaking of our artist) "*he was sent when a boy of nine years old to Venice, by his father, to a brother of his.*" It appears too, from authentic documents, that Antonio, brother of Gregory Vecelli, dwelt in the house of his father-in-law Coltrini; and that Titian, grateful for the tender care of his uncle, preferred his son Thomas Titus, the celebrated lawyer, father of Mark the painter, to all his other relations.

gentleman recommended him to Sebastian Zuccati, a worker in mosaic, and a tolerably good designer for those times, who seeing the very great progress the boy made, placed him with Gentile Bellini, at that time at work in the Hall of the Great Council-chamber. But very shortly after, Titian, tired of the dry, cold manner of Gentile, began to draw with more boldness and decision than his master; who seeing this, and angry that his pupil departed so much from his manner, told him that he would never profit by the art, if he continued to do so. The school of Gentile being thus left, he applied to his brother John, with whom it appears he remained till he was between eighteen and twenty: at which time Titian began to work for himself; and Vasari, who confounds dates in a very strange manner, says that when he began to follow the manner of Giorgione, he had already consumed much time in the first. Ridolfi says he had done many works before he painted the *Fondaco de' Tedeschi*, where he approached so near the style of Giorgione. And of these early works of his, those which are now preserved in Venice, prove that even before he became acquainted with Giorgione, Titian had considerably en-

larged and softened the style of his master, nay had even formed a style of his own.

Titian did many things in his first years for a certain John Danna, a Flemish gentleman, trading at Venice, an intimate friend, who afterwards stood god-father to one of his children. However, it is not to be supposed that they all belonged to the same period. Among others, Vasari mentions the portrait of this gentleman, done with so much spirit that it appeared alive; and an *Ecce Homo*, with other figures, which Titian himself was proud of. To these we ought to add a large picture, in which he drew from the life all the Danna family in the act of adoring the Virgin, who, seated on high, does not disdain to look down upon those devout persons. Another most celebrated work of his at this time was the portrait of Catherine Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus,* dressed in widow's weeds, whereby the delicacy of the flesh appeared more beautiful and striking. The renown of this princess, and the excellence of the work of the youthful painter, caused an infinity of

* This illustrious lady's rank, abdication, and beauty had acquired her the greatest celebrity; and the Asolani of Peter Bembo, with the portrait of Titian, gave an additional degree of splendour, and immortalized her memory.

copies to be taken from it, amongst which there were several very valuable ones, which in the time of Ridolfi were to be seen in Italy and elsewhere. And although Titian had already executed many other portraits, which shewed him superior to the Bellini and their school, it was still owing to the fame of Queen Cornaro, that he began to be known out of the Venetian territory.

Some German painters arrived about this time at Venice ; and Titian seeing some of their landscapes, pretty well done, and considering that the stories would acquire much more beauty and nature, if placed in a country more appropriate to the circumstances and ruling passions of the thing represented, contrived to get them to work in his own house. He applied to this sort of painting with so much ardour, that in a few months he left his masters far behind him, who knew not how to produce works of greater importance, and took away from posterity all hope of ever being able to surpass him. Therefore he now wished to make a trial of his newly-acquired talent in a great picture, with figures as large as life, representing the Holy Family in the middle of a wood, which he painted full of all sorts of beasts, drawn from nature, and in the back-ground a view of the

distant country, of such wonderful effect, that it was by every one considered a thing quite new and surprising. Nor could Titian have chosen a better subject for introducing every sort of wild beast, which aiding wonderfully in presenting the idea of a gloomy forest, give us a more lively sentiment of compassion for the fugitive family, who, to deceive the search of their ferocious persecutor, are compelled to traverse such savage wildernesses. Even the view of the distant country, which is fading away into the azure horizon as far as the eye can see, is skilfully contrived to show the length of the way which, with so much hardship, and without any human assistance, they have to journey over.

In the same style, he began another picture of the Angel and Tobias, which he finished in 1507, for the church of St Martial; and which in Ridolfi's time was in that of St Catherine. A full-grown stripling is guiding another of an age between childhood and youth. The first has a somewhat lighter step, and a more lovely face, than perhaps belongs to mortals. The head of the young Tobias is most beautiful, and full of life; who, turning sweetly round to his companion, shows that he trusts himself to his friendship. To indicate the action represented,

he has placed near Tobias that dog which, according to Scripture, so joyfully welcomed the return of his master. The landscape of this picture shows the very profound study Titian was making of aërial perspective; so that one is tempted to pardon him, on account of the great merit of the execution, the anachronism of St John the Baptist, who is seen at a distance in a tangled thicket, illuminated by a flash of lightning from heaven.

The picture of St Mark also belongs to this period, which was done for the convent of *Santo Spirito*, and which afterwards was removed into the sacristy of *S. Maria della Salute*, in which he represented St Mark seated on high on a cloud, and below St Cosmo and St Damian on one side, and on the other St Rocco and St Sebastian, whose faces, done with wonderful care, are the portraits of some of his acquaintance.

I will here give an account of the great picture of the Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple, painted for *La Carita*, which is yet to be seen, and which he did also at this time, though Zanetti thinks it is a work of his more mature years. Ridolfi who lived nearer the time of Titian, and who had under his eye the work, not yet injured by the hand of an unskilful

restorer, places it among the productions of his youth.

A little girl, about six or seven years old, is ascending alone, with noble security, the outward steps of the Temple, in whose serene eyes a ray of Heaven seems to shine and diffuse itself over all her beautiful limbs. The High Priest advances to meet her at the threshold of the Temple, whose dignified and aged aspect and the richness of his pontifical robes render him particularly worthy of respect. A young woman, but not however so young as to be without mature wisdom and prudence, accompanies at a short distance the wonderful child. You would say that the attention due to her tender pupil, who is at some distance from her, does not permit her to perceive that her veil has fallen with beautiful negligence from her head upon her shoulders, and allows a face to be seen so natural and *alive* that you are tempted to enter into conversation with her. A number of people, of different ages and sexes, are behind her, among whom one cannot sufficiently praise a man, who in the middle of the crowd, is standing on tip-toe in order to have a better view of the religious ceremony; nor can anything be imagined more beautiful than the head-dresses of the women who surround her.

The woman selling chickens and fowls and eggs is full of truth, and seems to have been done by a single dash. This person, though not forming part of the principal action, yet serves admirably to denote the place in which it happens, every body knowing that according to scripture every sort of eatable was wont to be scandalously sold in the vestibule of the temple of Jerusalem. Besides helping to give an idea of the customs of the place where the action happens, this figure assists wonderfully in the making up of the picture. If one were to take this woman from the spot in which the skill of the artist has placed her, it would leave a great piece of the grey wall of the staircase and of the adjoining building bare, and would destroy the effect of the whole composition. The heightened colour of the countrywoman, and especially that white cloth which is on her head, enliven all that side less covered with figures, and keep at a proper distance that part of the building which would otherwise be too prominent. The numerous figures which are seen at the windows of the house at the side of the Temple, and as it were a certain sleepy silence which reigns throughout the picture, make us have a better idea of the importance of the thing represented. The heads, nearly all of

which, according to the custom of the time, were drawn from nature, are alive and speaking. No studied foreshortening, nor affected contrasts of attitude and colouring, no tumult nor confused movements; simplicity and tranquil nature form the predominant character of this picture. Titian has been blamed for colouring the flesh rather too dark, perhaps with justice; and for representing the childish form of the Virgin less developed than is required by the somewhat severe air of her countenance.*

I will not say any thing of a *Christ in the Manger*, which Ridofi records as among the pictures possessed by the painter Gambarato, nor of the various pictures in fresco which Titian did at Venice before he attained the age of thirty, and enumerated likewise by Vasari; for it is not known where the former is to be found, and the others are lost or destroyed; and I do not wish to compose a dry catalogue of the portraits of different persons, done in his early youth. I must not omit however that most beautiful thing he did for a gentleman of the Barbarigo family, his particular friend and patron, by whose favour he

* Ridolfi says, that among the figures in this picture, about a third less than life, Titian painted many brothers of La Carita, and he mentions in particular Andrea de' Franceschi, then High Chancellor of the republic, and his most beloved friend, Lazzaro Crasso, &c.

obtained shortly afterwards the painting, in conjunction with Giorgione da Castel-Franco, a part of the front of the *Fondaco de' Tedeschi*.

In the beginning of the year 1505, the Fondaco de' Tedeschi being burnt, it was soon after entirely rebuilt in a manner much more magnificent in appearance as well as convenient; exactly at the time when Giorgio Barbarelli da Castel-Franco returned from his native place, where he had been for some time amusing himself with painting, to Venice; and having bought a house in the Campo S. Sylvestro, had painted the front of it to indicate his abode to those who wished to avail themselves of his talents. His new and grander manner of colouring being universally approved of, the external part of the Fondaco, which looks towards the Grand Canal, was given to him to paint; and to Titian was given, as we have said, the other side towards La Merceria. Titian was near thirty, and already known and considered excellent in the art for various works in oil; but he had not till then done any thing in fresco of much importance, like his friend and fellow-disciple: for which reason, I believe, he applied himself to study the frescoes of the latter, which had taken wonderfully, so that in the work of the Fondaco, more than in any other

before or after, he approached to the manner of Giorgione; and not only approached it, but by common consent surpassed it; of which this was the only ill consequence—that it broke off the old friendship between the two artists.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WOOD-ENGRAVING OF THE TRIUMPH OF FAITH—PICTURE FOR THE GREATER ALTAR OF THE CHURCH OF THE FRARI—TITIAN GOES TO VICENZA, WHERE HE PAINTS IN FRESCO THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON—OTHER PICTURES IN FRESCO, IN THE SCHOOL OF ST ANTONY OF PADUA—HIS RETURN TO VENICE AND MARRIAGE—FINISHES IN THE HALL OF THE GRAND COUNCIL-CHAMBER A HISTORY BEGUN BY GIORGIONE—OBTAINS FROM THE SENATE THE OFFICE OF LA SENSARIA—PAINTS THE DOGE LOREDANO.

At this time the wood-engravings of Martin were held in high request, and still more so those of Albert Durer, his fellow-countryman; which by the smallness of the price, and their being considered rich in novel and various fancies, were greedily sought after by every body, especially by painters, who hoped to find in them the seeds of every invention. Titian, therefore, wishing to restore to Italy an art formerly its own, which was now exercised only by some Flemings, designed and carved, in 1508, his Triumph of Faith, introducing in it

an infinite quantity of figures, in different attitudes and dresses; so that it was commonly considered a work more various, and of a better style than those of the Flemings at that time known in Italy, and of which they carried on a great trade in Venice.*

To this epoch, on the authority of Dolce,†

* The art of engraving on metal was known also to the ancients, was renewed by Muso Finiguerra, and Baccio Baldini, Florentine goldsmiths, about the year 1450, and afterwards practised by Alessandro Botticelli, Antonio Pollaivolo, and Andrea Mantegna. To these celebrated engravers we ought to add another not less excellent, although not so well known, Pellegrino of Cesio, a village in the territory of Feltre, of whom a particular notice is given in the first volume of the *Literary History of the Department of the Po.* From this art we afterwards learned that of engraving on wood, lead, copper, &c. although the process of engraving on brass and that of engraving on wood is different. The learned brother Guglielmo della Valle, in his Notes on the Lives of Painters by Vasari, says that the Triumph, engraved by Titian, had been some years before painted in fresco, in the monastery of Santa Justina, at Padua, by Parentino and Girolamo Campagnola. It is certainly true that Parentino, who died in 1490, painted in the monastery of Santa Justina, some histories in fresco, with little figures; which were afterwards continued, about the year 1530, by Girolamo Campagnola. I will admit that the paintings of Parentino might perhaps have given Titian the idea of his *Triumph;* but as there were in it many things entirely different, and many things which were afterwards painted by Campagnola, Titian cannot be accused of plagiarism; and the more so, as no conformity can be discovered between the invention of Parentino and the print by Titian.

† Zanetti considers this to have been done in 1515 or 1516, relying upon a writing on the base of the great cornice, with the

who, from his familiarity with Titian, should know more than any one else, I will assign the great picture done for the high altar of the church of the Frari at Venice, about which various opinions were held, for it was of a more determined character, and contrary to the custom of the Bellini school, contained figures rather larger than life. The Eternal Father occupies the top of the picture, whose venerable countenance shows him to be between old age and manhood; so he has given our Redeemer the appearance of matured youth; who, seated upon a resplendent throne of glory, is in the act of receiving his mother into heaven. Perhaps one might be tempted to wish for more lightness in the Virgin, who, surrounded by a group of most beautiful angels, is in the act of being elevated into the presence of the Eternal, if that sweet cast of countenance, which makes her appear humble in so much glory, did not attract all our attention to itself. I will not,

name of the friar who superintended the work, and bearing the date of 1516. But besides that the cornice might naturally have been put up after the picture, the account of Dolce is too circumstantial to be compromised by so uncertain a memorial. And this was the first public work he had done in oil; nor had Giorgione done any thing in oil till 1510, and he died in 1511. Besides, this work might have been begun by Titian in 1507, and not finished till some years after.

however, pretend to say that the cherubs, who are crowning her, might not have been still more beautiful. The too great number obliged the painter to make them small, so that they seem to you of a race too diminutive to be the companions of the others. He painted lower down the Apostles in different attitudes, not however so different as to disturb the unity of the action represented. The colours having been faded by time, and overpowered by the great glare of the side-lights, it would be unfair to judge of the skill employed in the distribution of lights and shades. It appears, however, that he had calculated with great sagacity the difficulty of a double light and the disadvantageous position in which he had to place the picture; a most important consideration which Titian was never wont to neglect. He therefore quitted that delicacy of colouring which, in all his other works, insensibly lost the tints in each other with so much softness, and made use of stronger and more striking contrasts, giving the figures which were to be in the distance large forms and decided outlines. This new grandeur of style did not satisfy the eye of the Frati nor of the public, accustomed to the miserable little figures of the old school, and for a short time they refused to take the

picture; but the offer of a considerable sum, made by the Imperial minister, corrected their judgment, and let all wise people see that the perfection of art was to be sought out of the limits assigned by Gian Bellini.

Scarcely was the war of the Cambrai over, and the land-cities returned under the gentle rule of the Republic, when Titian was sent for by the people of Vicenza, to paint the Palace della Ragione, where he represented the *Judgment of Solomon*, introducing many people of different dresses, ages, and sexes; and as the fortunate success of his work at the Fondaco de' Tedeschi had rendered him more confident and resolute, it appears that in this new undertaking, not being retarded by any difficulty, he shewed himself grander than ever. What a shame, that a work so valuable for the truth of the colouring, for the softness and perspicuity of the *chiaro-scuro*, and besides this, so esteemed for the force of expression, should, a few years afterwards, have been destroyed to make way for the building of a new Court of Justice!

But the fine frescoes which, before his return to Venice, he painted at Padua, in the school of St Antony, are still in being, where he represented three histories, from the adventures

of that Saint, with figures as large as life. These histories are by far the best that ever was done there, although Domenico Campagnola and Giovanni Contarino, very able painters, endeavoured to equal them. In the first history, St Thaumaturgus is seen in the act of presenting a little boy to his father, who by the uncertainty of his gesture, and the motionless expression of his eyes, which are turned towards the Saint, shows wonder and surprise. Near these stands a most beautiful woman, whose rich clothes and numerous suite of handsome young ladies prove her to be of rank. Encouraged by the aforesaid miracle, which shows the suspicions of her husband to be unjust, she evinces her joy and gratitude. Her head-dress is full of grace: her hair is bound up in a rich net, not however so tightly but that some locks are allowed to fall with pleasing negligence on her shoulders. In another picture is painted a lady recalled to life by the Saint, to whom the enraged husband, who had barbarously killed her, is returning due thanks. If we can impute any fault to this picture, it must be the surprising beauty of the country, which as it were makes one forget the principal object. Finally, on a large space above the door of the sacristy, he painted also in fresco

the miracle done in favour of that youth, who having had a foot cut off, as a punishment for a fault committed by him, was cured by the Saint.* Ridolfi relates, though not as a thing quite authenticated, that during his stay at Padua, Titian painted in the interior of a chamber in the house where he lived, the Triumph of Faith, which he had engraved and published.

On his return to Venice he painted the front of the Grimani palace, and did a good many other things of little importance. He was now about thirty-four years old; and finding himself alone, as his brother Francesco had wished to retire to his native place, where their common parents still lived, he married Lucia, a Venetian lady, by whom he had three children; in 1513, Pomponio, who, for the merits of his father, was made a canon of Milan, and possessor of many other benefices; Horatio, in 1515, an imitator of his father's excellence; and finally, a daughter whom he tenderly loved, and who in due time was married to Cornelio Sarcinelli. While Titian tasted the innocent pleasures of his recent marriage, his fellow-

* This last picture was engraved by Le Fevre; and the three others are to be found among the prints of Carlo Patina.

disciple, the only man in Venice who could aspire to the glory of contending with him for the first honours of the art, Giorgione da Castel Trane, cheated of a mistress whom Morto da Feltre* had rendered unfaithful to him, died of

* That Pietro Lucci, surnamed Morto da Feltre, had been first the pupil of Giorgione, thence went to Rome with the lady of his master, and put himself under Raphael, has been sufficiently proved; but there is not so much foundation for saying that Giorgione died for grief on account of it.

Vasari insists that the picture of Alexander the Third was left imperfect by John Bellini; but, besides that Ridolfi reports it in one place, as the opinion of some people, that it was left imperfect by Giorgione, and not Bellini, further on he says expressly, that in the year 1511, some works of Giorgione were given to Titian to be finished, *among which was the History of Alexander the Third and Frederic the First.* And somewhere else, describing the work of Titian in the hall of the greater Council-Chamber, he adds that he was sent for to Ferrara to finish *the Bacchanal* left imperfect by John Bellini. Now this person died, not in 1512, as some people have erroneously asserted, but rather about the end of 1514, in which year he was still working for the Duke of Ferrara; and therefore it is not likely that three years before, and when he was still capable of so important a subject as the Bacchanal of Ferrara, he should have neglected a work committed to him by the Senate.

Besides, the same Vasari, after saying that the Senate gratified Titian with the office of La Sensaria for the picture of Alexander the Third, finished in the Hall of the greater Council-Chamber, adds: "The Duke Alphonso having in the year 1514 built a small room, wished also some pictures by the hand of John Bellini to be there, who did them..... &c. J. Bellino wrote on the large wine-vat represented, *Jo. Bellinus, Venetus*, 1514; which work, the artist not having finished on account of his age, it was sent to

a broken heart about the end of the year 1511, leaving imperfect a picture which he had undertaken to paint in the hall of the Greater Council-Chamber, representing the Emperor Frederic the First kissing the foot of Pope Alexander the Third.

The very great credit which Titian had obtained by his paintings at the Fondaco, and still more so by his recent performances at Padua, caused him to be universally chosen to finish the imperfect work of him with whom he had formerly so successfully contended. It is proper, however, to suppose that Giorgione's work was not much advanced, since we know that Titian did not limit himself to merely finishing it, but did the picture nearly all over again, and very probably paid no attention to his friend's original design. In a subject like this, which permitted the fancy of the artist to introduce an infinite number of persons in the suite of the Emperor, the Pope, and the Signiory of Venice, Titian had an opportunity of painting without offence to costume his friends and protectors,

Titian, as being the most excellent of all the artists, to be finished." Vasari saying that the work of Bellini was done with much skill, insomuch that it was one of the best things that he ever did, one cannot suppose that he was unable to finish three years before a painting in the great Council-Chamber.

drawn from life, and drest according to their rank.*

In this work done for the great receptacle of Venetian painting, and in competition, if I may so say, with the most distinguished masters, he wished to show how superior he was to all who had preceded him, the Bellini, Vivarini, and others. Therefore, the Senate gave him the office of the Sensaria (or brokerage) in the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, as a situation intended to reward the most excellent painter, like the office of the Piombo at Rome.

* As this work perished in the fire of 1576, which destroyed so many of the finest pictures of the Venetian school, and as it was never engraved, I will add the description given of it by Ridolfi— "Titian finished the great picture in which Frederic the First is kissing the foot of Pope Alexander the Third, in the church of St Mark. By the side of the Pope was the Doge Sebastian Ziano, and near him Pietro Bembo, Jacopo Saunazzario, Ludovico Ariosto, Andrea Navagero, Agostino Bavazzano, Gasparo Contarino, Marco Musuro, Fra Giacondo Veronese, Antonio Tron, Domenico Trevisano, Paolo Capello, Marco Grimano, the son of Prince Antonio, the procurator of St Mark, and Giorgio Cornaro, in cloth of gold. The attendants on the Emperor were Gonsalvo Ferrante, called the Great Captain, the Count of S. Severino, and other personages of the time, taken from the individuals, so that they appeared alive. He also represented with much propriety the mantles of the Cardinals striped with sea-waves, the delicacy of the vestments woven of the finest flax: and in the figures of that church he imitated the mosaic with the arms of the Doge, which, after his death, were hung there; representing this history with so much grandeur, that the ceremony itself was not conducted with greater pomp and decorum.

Titian wishing to show himself grateful for the generosity of his prince, which had ensured him an annuity for life of three hundred crowns, according to Vasari, or four hundred, as Ridolfi states, hastened to paint the portrait of the then Doge, Leonardo Loredano, though elevated to that supreme height more than ten years, which appears a wonderful thing. And they created their Doges so much from hand to hand, that as a duty annexed to the office of La Sensaria, he painted all down to the Doge Lorenzo Priuli, who in consideration of the advanced age of the noble painter, excused him an obligation for which he only obtained eight crowns.*

* Vasari says he was invested with the office of Sensaria del Fondaco before he had done this work; but Ridolfi thinks he did not obtain it till he had painted Andrea Gritti, created Doge in 1523, and the Battle of Cadore between the Imperialists and the Venetians. However, it is not a question of much importance.

CHAPTER XXX.

CALLED TO FERRARA BY DUKE ALFONSO THE FIRST — FINISHES THE PICTURES LEFT IMPERFECT BY JOHN BELLINI, AND TAKES COPIES OF THEM — PAINTS THE PORTRAITS OF THE DUKE, THE DUCHESS ELEONORA, AND LUDOVICO ARIOSTO — DIFFERENT WORKS IN VENICE AND CADORE—IN 1520 RETURNS TO FERRARA, AND TAKES THE PORTRAIT OF LAURA EUSTOCHIO—OTHER WORKS OF HIS UP TO 1523.

In 1511, died Giorgio Barbarelli da Castel-Franco, called Giorgione, who if he did not equal Titian in truth of colouring and softness of contour, he might perhaps have surpassed him in perspicuity of *chiaro-scuro* and that air of grandeur which he well knew how to give his figures. John Bellini feeling himself incapable of any longer attention to art, closed his professional career with the Bacchanal of Ferrara, and came to terminate a glorious and long life in his native place, in the year 1514. His most illustrious disciples, Pellegrino da San Danielo and Sebastiano, who was then called

Fra del Piombo, would in vain have attempted to put a stop to the glory of Titian, which flowed like a torrent through all parts. Pordenone was not yet known among painters, not, however, that he would have desired at such an epoch to enter into a competition with so great a man; and Francesco Vecelli, lately sent for from the army, after studying for some time in the house of his brother those principles which might one day have made him his equal, retired to Cadore, where trade and the administration of public affairs rendered him less attentive to the study of painting.* And in consequence of this Titian remained superior, far superior to all the Venetian painters, and was eagerly called upon by the neighbouring cities and the principal Signiors for works of the greatest importance. We have already seen that the Duke of Ferrara had a closet or small chamber painted by John Bellini; and that Dosso Dossi, the celebrated Ferrarese artist, worked at it in conjunction with him.

* It is so rooted an opinion, that Titian seeing the very rapid progress Francesco made in painting, grew afraid of him, and induced him under specious pretences to abandon the profession, that a bare assertion to the contrary would not be believed without the aid of the positive testimonies which will be produced in the life of Francesco hereafter appended.

But partly because Bellini had left some few things in his picture imperfect, though principally because the Duke wished to have some of the works of so great a master, he invited Titian upon very honourable terms to his court before Bellini was hardly out of it. And of such excellence were the works done there by Titian, that Annibal Caracci called them the finest pictures in the world; adding, that he who had not seen them, might say that he had never seen any wonder of art. Raphael Mengs too, whom no one will suspect of partiality to Titian, says that he never saw these pictures, though he saw them very often, without feeling very great pleasure. It would be wrong not to insert here the description given with so much spirit by Ridolfi; especially as the prints which we have of two of those works, are not such as to give us a satisfactory notion of the beauty of the originals.*

In the first, upon the sea-coast, is the God Bacchus triumphant over the Indies, in the act of descending from a chariot, drawn by two panthers, captivated by the beauty of the forsaken Ariadne. Near the chariot is Pampinus

* Giov. Andrea Podestà, a Genoese engraver, published in 1636 two prints of the Triumph of Bacchus.

Satirettus, his favourite, dragging by a rope the skull of a calf, the customary sacrifice in the feasts of Bacchus, in memory of Pantheus, who was killed by the Bacchanals, and changed into that animal, whose beautiful face was described by Marino, exactly as painted by Titian, in the following lines:

"La bella Fronte gli adornò natura
Di gentil maestà, d'aria celeste;
Dolce color di fragola matura
Gli facea rosseggiar le guancie oneste;
Nella bocca ridea la grana pura
Tra schiette perle in doppio fil conteste,
Nè quivi avea la rosa porporina
Prodotta ancor la sua dorata spina."

Then follow a number of Bacchantes, playing on various loud musical instruments. Among them is a drunken man, bound with serpents, which the attendants of Bacchus were wont to twine round their bodies, whose staggering steps signify the restless condition into which wine immoderately taken throws us; with many other drunken people feasting upon the sacrificed calf, and Silenus leaning upon his attendants dead-drunk, crowned with vine-leaves and grapes. In the distance are seen the ships of the faithless Theseus sailing over the waters,

and the crown of Ariadne glittering in Heaven. In the second picture he painted a number of the same attendants of Bacchus, with several Bacchantes, on the banks of a wine-coloured river, which takes its source from a neighbouring hill, where one of them is stretched along, pressing a quantity of grapes: and in one of the female Bacchantes the painter drew the portrait of a lady whom he was in love with, called Violante, making an allusion to her name by a bunch of violets, which he placed on her bosom, and wrote on them in small letters *Tiziano*. Other drunken people are filling vases with the liquor from the river; one of them is puffing out his cheeks with the rich beverage from a leathern bag full of wine: and another, a handsome cup-bearer, is pouring out moderate draughts in transparent cups for the musicians, while a little boy in sport makes water in them. Some are dancing in rounds with young girls, drest in fine silks, which raised by a light wind in the course of their beautiful motions, display the whiteness and incomparable delicacy of their well-shaped legs. One of these girls, wearied perhaps, having made herself a pillow of her profusion of hair and a richly gilded vase, is lying asleep on her back; her limbs are so delicately

soft that nothing can surpass them, and in her face one can see the breathing of her calm repose. Some people on horseback are present at the festival.

In the third picture of the *Triumph of Love*, is seen a delightful meadow covered with soft grass, surrounded with laughing trees, from which hang golden and ruby apples; and upon them a little group of Cupids are plucking the sweet fruit from the loaded boughs, and throwing it down to their companions, who gather it up in woven baskets: others taking hold of the trunk of the tree, are trying to climb up it; one of them fitting his arrow to the bow aims it at his friend, who exposes his white bosom; others are flinging apples at one another. Finally, some others are mimicking the various effects of love, and the mutual exchange of two loving hearts. Meanwhile a numerous train of little boys who had hung their quivers on the trunks of the trees, are endeavouring to make a booty of a timid hare, attacking it with their bows and arrows, while another troop of them making a circle with their joined hands, are dancing and leaping over one another. The Graces are seen standing by an image of Venus, playing on cymbals, and looking at themselves in clear chrystalline mirrors.

The pen is confounded when writing of so many beauties, Titian having here painted a divine Ariadne in a most divine manner, and given with much truth the joy and delight which sparkles in the faces of the drunken dancers, their gladness increased by those bold girls reeling about in voluptuous attitudes by reason of the quantity of wine drunk, the beauty of the children, and the smiling appearance of the trees, verdant with vernal leaves. These most celebrated Bacchanals, when Ferrara came into the hands of the Pope, were sent to Rome, composing probably a part of that shameful plunder of pictures which took place in 1617, by order of the legate Serra, of which Frizzi speaks in his *Memorie per la Storia di Ferrara*. The second and third Bacchanal remained for a few years at Rome, in the palace Lodovisi, whence they were sent by a Cardinal of that family as a present to the king of Spain. Marco Boschini relates, that when on their way they were forwarded to the Viceroy of Naples, he, as an amateur of painting, exhibited them in his palace, and among many others sent for Domenichino to see them, who was at that time at work in the bishop's palace; and he, wonderfully disturbed at the sight of these noble works which were passing from Italy to a foreign land, could not refrain from

tears. He adds that Alexander Varottari had taken some fine copies of them. The other Bacchanal, which is the first described by Ridolfi, is still to be found in the palace Pamfili at Rome.

Ridolfi and Boschini, with the intention of immortalizing the memory of the loves of Titian and the beautiful Violante, daughter of old Palma, have given rise, without wishing it, to an infinity of idle biographical discussions. Some have wished to fix the birth of old Palma and his daughter, and comparing her youth with the advanced age of Titian, had concluded that he could only feel for her an innocent affection, and not the impure flame of love.* Others have instituted an ingenious comparison between the features of the different pictures which are shown in the galleries, under the title of "the Mistress of Titian," with those of the celebrated Bacchante, which according to Ridolfi was a portrait of the said Violante. However, the most admired of these pictures is that described by Boschini, which was then in the gallery Serra at Venice, was afterwards purchased by the Senate of Tuscany, and is

* Titian when he painted this Bacchante was only thirty-four or thirty-seven at most.

now at Florence. The description by Boschini above-mentioned is as follows:

" Ghe zè quela Viola, o Violante,
Che anca Tician ghe volse dar de naso
Al bon odor; del resto qua mi taso,
Che nol fu minga un vizioso amante.

" Viola da una palma partorida,
Che più vecchia che l'è l'è più feconda,
E de fruti sì dolci e rari abonda,
Ch' anca a bramarli el gran Vecelio ariva.

" Pianta che in do maniere partorisse
Fruti, che l'un e l'altro è al par gustoso,
Se naturali, ognun ghe n'è goloso,
Se col penelo, ognun ghe ne stupisse.

" O zogia veramente e gran tesoro!
Pitura fata co la palma in man!
Tegnuda in tanto pregio da Tician,
Che fango pareria le perle e l'oro."

I will here mention another painting of "*the Mistress of Titian*," which would appear to be the most authentic of the two, if we are to believe Scanelli, who in his *Microcosm of Painting*, speaking of the pictures in the Gallery of Modena, employs a whole page in the description of "*the most famous picture of the Mistress of*

Titian," represented in the act of walking with a fan in her hand ; he adds, that they exhibited in the same gallery an autograph letter of Titian to the Duke Alfonso of Ferrara, when he sent the picture as a present to him, in which he tells that prince, "that he had worked with the greatest spirit and industry, in order to make it correspond in some measure to his great merit, by means of the expression of the object most dearly beloved by him, thinking that in her your Highness will appreciate the very great desire I have of satisfying you, having nothing dearer to me." This picture is now in the Gallery of Dresden.

I will add to this a few thoughts about a most beautiful engraving done by the painter Vandyke. It represents Titian, an old man, seated opposite a beautiful young woman, pregnant, whose bosom he is affectionately patting. The girl is standing, with one arm leaning on a box, in which is seen a skull, and underneath are written the following lines :

" Ecce viro, quæ grata suo est, nec pulchrior ulla,
Pignora conjugii ventre pudica gerit.
Sed tamen an vivens, au mortua, picta tabella
Hæc magni Titiani arte ..... ta fiet."

Some syllables of this last verse are effaced.

From the emblem of the skull and the words of the third line, one would conjecture that the young woman died in child-bed ; and the second line makes one suppose that she was the lawful wife of Titian, but every one knows how easy it was at that time, and before they accepted the decrees of the Council of Trent relating to Matrimony, to confound the wife with the mistress.

These capital works, compared with the performances of Dosso Dossi, greatly astonished the Duke, who was already become much attached to Titian from his noble and modest behaviour ; and he was painted by him, as large as life, with one hand resting on a piece of artillery, as he had wonderfully perfected the art of founding those terrible instruments. He also painted the portrait of the Duchess Lucretia Borgia, in a superb dress of black velvet, which appeared to be real, with a most beautiful head-dress of a veil and jewels interwoven in her hair in a most masterly manner. Her left hand is placed on the shoulder of a little negro boy, and she is advancing with dignified affability towards the Duke.* And that among

* This picture was engraved on copper by Egidius Sadeler, and many other copies were taken of it. Vasari does not mention the portrait of the Duchess; but Ridolfi, who must have seen it, gives a description of it.

so many lighter pieces there should not be wanting a work of devotion, with which he might (as a friend of Titian wrote to Charles V) satisfy religion and the holy faith, as he did soft love with profane pictures, gratifying at once body and soul; he painted for the Duke, over the door of an armoury, a half-figure of Christ, to whom a Jew is showing Cæsar's money, which picture, as every one who saw it testified, was a wonderful and stupendous performance.*

Titian's long stay at Ferrara rendered his

* Ridolfi relates, that the Imperial Ambassador, seeing this Christ, confessed that Titian surpassed in diligence Albert Durer himself. Of this noble picture, which is called *Il Christo di Moneta*, many copies were taken before it was sent with other excellent works to Dresden. Titian wished to show in this, that he could surpass the Germans in delicacy of finishing, without falling into the same dry and trivial manner. Lanzi, in his History of Painting, says, "He worked at his Christ with such attention to delicacy, that he surpassed even that master of minuteness. One might count the hairs on the head and hands, and the pores of the skin,—and yet the effect is not injured; for while the pictures of Albert, by diminishing the size diminish the value, Titian enhances and renders them more grand. But happily for the arts, this and the portrait of Barberigo are the only works in this manner which Titian ever did after freeing himself from the school of his master: a bad manner, which, though it can certainly present with exactness the hair, the wrinkles, the pores, and all the trifling parts and imperfections of the human body, is utterly incompetent to give grandeur and true beauty, the noble passions of the mind, and the marvellous effects of nature."

acquaintance, contracted some years before, with Ludovico Ariosto, more intimate;* he now painted him, as large as life, in a dress of black velvet lined with the fur of a lynx: and this portrait was fully worthy of so great a man. And as Ariosto was then preparing his Furioso for the press, Titian drew another portrait of him of a smaller size, which was engraved and prefixed as a frontispiece to the first edition of that immortal poem.†

* If we are to believe Vasari, Titian was not acquainted with the author of the Furioso before he went to Ferrara. "Titian at that time contracted an acquaintance with the divine M. Ludovico Ariosto, and was by him acknowledged to be the most excellent painter." It is however a fact that they knew and esteemed each other before that time; and that Titian, in testimony of the very exalted opinion he had of that prince of poets, introduced his portrait, as we have before stated, in the picture of Frederic and Pope Alexander III.

† Barufaldi, speaking of these pictures in his life of Ariosto, says: "The first of which Il Pigna speaks was painted at the time when Titian was residing at Ferrara, when sent for there by the Duke, to work in some apartments of the ducal palace called the Castle. Virginio Ariosto, having succeeded to the inheritance of his father, and being at Padua, arranged that this picture of Titian's should be sent him there from Ferrara, as we learn by a letter from Giulio Trevisano to Giulio Ariosto in 1554. The picture finally was sent to Venice, where Fontanini, in his *Eloquenza Italiana*, mentions having seen it in the Vianoli palace at San Cangiano. Titian also painted another portrait on a small scale, which being engraved, was to serve as an ornamental frontispiece to the first edition of the Furioso. Thus far we are assured by Giovanni

Their friendship, which was preserved through life unaltered, was strengthened by mutual acts of service, and more particularly by the assistance they rendered each other in their respective professions. So Raphael was accustomed at one time to profit by the knowledge and wisdom of Balthasar Castiglione, whom that excellent artist reckoned among the few who knew what true beauty was. It is a common opinion, confirmed also by Ridolfi, that Ludovico consulted about several things in his Furioso with Titian; and that he obtained from him some useful information when describing the beauty of Alcina, of Olympia, and other ladies introduced in that divine poem. This is a fresh proof that they were acquainted before Titian went to Ferrara; for it is known that in

Maria Verdizzotti, a pupil of Titian, who in a letter to Horatio Ariosto, dated Venice, 27th February 1588, says, 'You, Sir, will now see how I love and esteem your father, whose portrait I send you engraved on paper, one of two copies which the most excellent Titian gave me, who painted him, and also drew this design in the first volume which was printed of his Furioso, or to speak more correctly, in the first edition. You will then keep it for my sake, and that of the Duke your great uncle, and of the author, who was his dearest friend and companion.' This same print, which is still to be seen in the first editions of the satires and comedies, was justly considered by Apostolo Zeno as the best likeness; and he therefore ordered Stefano Orlandini to put it in front of the magnificent edition of Ariosto in folio, printed in 1730."

1514 Ariosto had already finished his Furioso, though it was not published before 1515. The description of Alcina, especially if deprived of some poetical flowers, has very much the appearance of the particulars which constitute a beautiful lady having been pointed out by a painter. And any one who is inclined to compare the works of these two great geniuses will easily find such a resemblance, as (were every other evidence wanting) must render the supposition that they gave each other advice and instruction very likely. He will perceive too that both imitating the simplicity of nature, endeavoured with wonderful skill to conceal the difficulties of the art; unlike other poets and painters, who seem to have placed the highest degree of perfection in making the difficulties as plain as possible. As one of Titian's Venuses was admitted as a companion to the Greek Venus, so the Alcina and Olympia of Ludovico would not be altogether unworthy to be paralleled with Helen and Dido. Titian, a great landscape-painter, a great inventor, a truly great colourist, painted objects with that perspicuity and infinite variety, with which Ludovico describes great and singular adventures; so that you seem to be present at those battles, at those tempests, and those amorous follies.

Sentiment and eloquence are in poetry what design and colouring are in painting; it will be found that both of them, making use in their art of these two means with equal grace, propriety, and skill, attained to a perfect imitation of nature, without any apparent artifice, though they employed the greatest artifice in appearing to use none. And to bring some particular passages, whereby the comparison can be rendered more obvious, who in the Angelica of Ariosto, to whom the rustling of every leaf brings to mind the danger of Medoro, does not recognise the Venus of Titian, who in the act of being left by Adonis, expresses by the unsettled rolling of her eyes, and the contraction of her eyebrows, the fatal forebodings of her heart? And when you read—

> La Virginella è simile alla rosa,

and again,

> Spargeasi per la guancia delicata,
> Misto color di rose e di ligustri, &c.

or indeed,

> Era il bel viso suo quale esser suole
> Di primavera alcuna volta il cielo,

and similar passages, do you not seem to perceive the soul of that soft voluptuousness, which

to every gentle mind recals the portrait of the young lady of the Strozzi family and that beautiful Venus, at the sight of which, before they were sent to Charles V. all Venice was wonder-struck and mute?

Generously recompensed, Titian returned to Venice in 1515, carrying with him the love of the Duke, who, coming frequently to Venice, never failed to pay the artist a visit, and sometimes used to take him in his galley and carry him back to Ferrara. Titian also in this year painted a picture on linen for the father-in-law of a certain Giovanni da Castel Bolognese, representing, in a smiling country, a naked young man to whom a beautiful girl is presenting a flute.

And as the enviers of the skill of so great a man could not now deny that he was the most faithful imitator of nature, inasmuch as he paid great attention to a correct representation of all the effects of light and shade, they spread a report that he was incapable of depicting the soul and speaking to the mind, a most principal part of the imitative arts, by which alone they create those powerful and lasting emotions which are wont to agitate our minds at the sight of the Laocöon and the Niobe. He therefore set himself resolutely to work to study (if I

may be allowed the expression) the *ethics* of painting; and the first fruit of this study was the picture of the Annunciation, which he did for Amelio Cortona.* Perhaps the critics may think that the form of the Angel is somewhat more heavy than becomes a heavenly messenger; but they will not the less feel the sublime expression of the face and the modest attitude of the Virgin, nor the less admire that sweet downcast look of her eyes or that bashful blush, which seems to the spectator to cover all her divine countenance.

In the midst of the universal astonishment which was excited in the minds of all people endowed with good judgment by the sight of this picture, they could not understand whence Titian took the idea of such perfection: but when they saw the second fruit of it in the great picture done for the church of San Nicolo de' Frari, it was apparent to every body, that the study of some antique pieces of sculpture, which, till that time, had remained almost unnoticed in Venice, and copies of others, which he had procured from other parts, had taught him to communicate to his works that animat-

* Cortona, who was at that time brother of the monastery of San Rocco, left, at his death, this picture to the monastery, by a will dated 30th October 1555. See Tossati.

ing fire, without which the finest figures can have neither life nor expression.*

On a light cloud, illumined by the rays of the setting sun, is seated the Virgin with the Divine Child on her breast, before whom are standing in most devout attitudes two handsome boys, who seem just emerging from childhood. A ruined edifice occupies the bottom of the picture, in which is seen the titular Saint, absorbed in a pious ecstacy, keeping his eyes fixed upon the Heavenly Mother. There is no doubt that Titian took the head of this Saint from that of the Laocöon; but he adapted it to his subject, and did not imitate it entirely like the more bigotted copyists of the antique: for we do not find in it the expression of the suffering hero, but that of a soul wrapt in a sublime transport by the contemplation of celestial beauty. At her side is standing, with an air of modest dignity, St Catherine, a woman of mature beauty, such as Apelles or Zeuxis would have painted the Spartan Venus or a Matron of Crotona. The complexion some-

* That Titian studied the antique before he ever saw Rome, besides the head of St Nicholas, is proved by those Twelve Cæsars done in Mantua, of which I shall speak by and by; and by the Angels in the Peter Martyr, in imitation of the Greek bas-relief in the church of the Miracles.

what dark, the grand forms and contours opposed to the delicacy of the Virgin Mary and the Magdalen, show her capable of enduring the most exquisite torments of martyrdom. The figure also of St. Peter assists wonderfully in giving harmony to the picture, to which the sober colour of the dresses of St Francis and St Antony also contributes. But what is most wonderful of all, and where the flesh is executed most naturally, is the figure of St Sebastian, a most beautiful young man, naked, and who is heroically sustaining the extreme pains of approaching death. The skilful artist, by this method of giving a greater degree of beauty to those whom he wished to represent in a moment of suffering, rendered the spectator's sentiment of commiseration the more acute, as the delicacy and loveliness of that body shows it to be less capable of supporting the bitterness of its torments.

This naked figure alone would be sufficient to give the lie to those people, who allowing Titian the palm of colouring, deny him that of design; an old calumny, which unhappily has kept ground to this day, because, supported by a not very intelligible expression of Vasari,*

* "Fine colouring," wrote Ludovico Dolce to M. Gasparo Bellini, "without good design, does not constitute beauty. Hence

who not being able to deny to this naked figure the perfection of design, outline, and colouring, while he confesses it appears stamped from the living model, taxes it with possessing no artificial ideal beauty in the legs and trunk. But for all that, he adds, it is considered fine. Perhaps the remark of some one else would be more reasonable about his having united saints of different ages and countries, who never met together while they lived. But, besides that such an anachronism is in part justified by the will of him for whom the work is done, it is also lessened by the skill of the

they are wrong, who wishing to commend the admirable Titian, say he colours well. If he deserved no other praise than this, many ladies would excel him, who, without doubt, paint their faces with white and red, so that, as far as the appearance of the colour goes, men are deceived by it. But if they have a long nose, a wide mouth, and eyes in which are no marks of grace and beauty, if they squint or are badly formed, the tints of those colours do not prevent the ugliness and defects from appearing. The merit of painting then is principally in the disposition of the forms and the finding out what is most beautiful and perfect in nature. In this, the divine Titian is without an equal, as one who to the perfection of design adds the vivacity of colouring so like, that his works appear not paintings but realities, exciting the affections and passions of the soul in such a manner, that the spectators either rejoice or are sad according to the subject." And Sperone Speroni, in his dialogue on love, says: "Madam, you wrong Titian, (praising his colouring) whose pictures are dearer to great men, than many things which nature herself produces."

painter, who makes a glory which collects round him all those who are called to participate in it.*

Although it was done somewhat later, let me be here allowed to give a description of another excellent picture which he painted for the Pesaro family, in the great church in the same convent de' Frari. Near a pedestal in the centre of the picture, is seated Our Lady with the infant in her arms, who putting one foot playfully on her hand, is returning his mother's tenderness with welcome caresses. St Peter, with one hand leaning upon a book, is turning with an air of dignity to a prelate, who is offering the Virgin the Ottoman standards, carried

* It is proper to mention that Titian was much pleased with this performance, having written in large letters: *Titianus faciebat.* "Of this work," writes the anonymous Author, "being of supreme excellence, he himself was quite enamoured, and contrived that it should be seen by all the world by means of a print taken of it." P. Gulielmo della Valle, in a note in an edition of Vasari done under his inspection at Sienna, says, "This stupendous picture, obtained by Clement XIV, is to be seen in the Pontifical Gallery of the Quirinal, and every one finds in it that beauty with which Titian himself was so enchanted." It was etched by Valentine Lefèbre.

Who would believe that this picture being seen with the works of other artists by Raphael Mengs, and being told by the Pope that they were also liked by M. N., answered: "I and N. are two artists: he praises all that he cannot surpass, and I blame all works that are inferior to mine!"

by a soldier, who is standing by his side, covered from head to foot with polished armour, of which the reflections have given the artist an opportunity of displaying his peculiar skill in this magic part of the art. On the other side are seen St Francis and St Anthony; and in the lower part of the picture, three members of the Pesaro family, all in senatorial habits, whose faces, drawn as it appears from nature, are full of life and truth. The white satin dress of a handsome young man forms an admirable contrast to the dark colour of the senatorial habit; and his youthful and ingenuous countenance gives more solemnity to the venerable features of the senators. To show that this picture was intended to eternize the memory of the victory obtained over the enemies of the Cross by Bishop Baffo, one of the Pesaro family, General of the Pope's army, Titian skilfully brought in upon a bright cloud two angels, carrying in triumph the august sign of our salvation.

I ought, however, to make particular mention of that picture of Christ, which he did at this time, for the church of St Rocco, which is still preserved in a small niche near the greater chapel. Titian represented in this the Divine Redeemer with the cross on his shoulders, and

the forms of the *beau ideal*. And truly, if to so great and rare acquirements he had added Raphael's design, he would have been probably the most perfect painter; as Raphael might, perhaps, have risen higher, had he learnt from Titian the *beau ideal* of colouring, and the delicacy of shadowing. However, it is certain that events kept divided two very great men, to whom no other favour of fortune was wanting but that of knowing and loving each other.*

But that Titian might not have occasion to lament his having neglected the Pope's invitation, and that he might have a good excuse for his refusal, the Senate gave him a commission to paint in the hall of the Grand Council-chamber, a large history of the battle which was fought in Cadore between the Venetians and the Imperialists, of which noble picture, as it

* "And I remember," writes Vasari, "that Messer Bastiano del Piombo, talking on this subject, said to me, that if Titian had been at that time at Rome, and had seen the works of Michael Angelo, those of Raphael, and the antique statues, and had studied design (although he designed as well as the greatest masters) he would have executed most stupendous works, seeing the fine practice which he had in colouring, and his deserved reputation of being the finest and greatest imitator of nature of our time, (and it was unequalled) and would have been joined with Urbino and Buonarotti as the founders of design." He adds that the Peter Martyr, the John the Baptist, and the portrait of Signora Laura gave proof of this.

most unfortunately perished in the destruction of the ducal palace by fire, I will transcribe the description given by Ridolfi; who although he himself could not see the original, had yet under his eyes a faithful copy of it, which was then not wanting, and could have an account of it from people who had seen it before the fire. "He had painted an actual view of his native place, with a castle on a high mountain, which the lightning had caught, with dark masses of smoke like clouds issuing from it, mingling with the horrors of the sudden tempest. In the meanwhile a terrible battle of horse and foot incumbers the field, some of whom are defending with their long swords the Imperial banner, which, agitated by the wind, flutters about in the air. In the middle of the fray are seen some clad in coats-of-mail thrown down by the horses, and some dead soldiers stripped naked; over the bridge which crosses the river are coming a body of cavalry to support the Venetians, among whom is borne the avenging standard of St Mark. Near them is Liviano, General of the army, leaning with one arm on a sword, while his squire is fastening the shoulder-piece of his armour; and at a short distance a groom, dressed in a red slashed coat, is holding a white charger, which, animated by the

grotesques which were brought to light about this time (I do not know with how great honour to painting, but certainly not without a singular beauty) by Raphael, Giovanni da Udine, and Morto da Feltre.

On his return to Venice, his imagination yet warm with the ideas excited in him by the woody mountains of Cadore and by the verdant beauty of those noble heights, he painted, for the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, that St John the Baptist in the wilderness, which will always be a clear evidence that Titian knew how to represent the fine forms of robust manhood, and not merely delicate women and children; to design skilfully, and to give the proper expression to his figures. Near a rock crowned with leafy trees, which on one side allows the eye to wander over a small piece of uncultivated country, is seen, standing upright, entirely naked (if we except that he is slightly covered with a small skin of some animal, for the sake of modesty) the holy recluse, in an attitude becoming a man, who occupied by profound thought, has no determined movement; a situation admirably expressed by the concentrated fixed look of the eyes and by the repose of the muscles of the legs and arms: the complexion is such as

becomes a healthy person of between thirty and forty years old, who, born in civilized life, has made himself for a long time an inhabitant of the forests. His figure less elegant than that of the most handsome of the Gods, and more so than that of Hercules, if it be not that which belongs to divinity, is the finest which falls to man.* Thus this great man, having felt (long before the greatest part of his works had shown it) the philosophy of his art, and known the *beau ideal* of colouring and form, did not permit his pencil to depart from the limits of nature merely to make a show of an exaggerated beauty, which does not fall to the lot of mortals.

In July 1519, died Lucretia Borgia, duchess of Ferrara; wherefore Alfonso the First, not wishing to insult with splendid nuptials her so recent loss, cast his eyes on a young Ferrarese girl, and kept her sometime as a mistress, and afterwards, when he knew her singular virtues, married her. Her, very likely before he married her, but after the death of the Duchess Lucretia, the Duke caused Titian

* This picture is still in the Academy of Fine Arts at Venice. It had been greatly injured, but has been carefully restored, leaving untouched those parts which were not damaged. There is a copy of it by Professor Cipriani, and an engraving by Valentine Lefebre.

to paint; and this portrait was allowed by Vasari to be a most masterly performance. His words are—"He likewise drew the Signora Laura, who was afterwards married to the Duke, which is a stupendous work." Signor Muratori, who has got together infinite evidences, both from contemporary and subsequent authors, to prove that Signora Laura was the lawful wife of Alfonso the First, has not seen this passage from Vasari, which alone is worth all the rest. It is also observable that this writer has not made mention of the portrait of the Duchess Lucretia, described by Ridolfi in such a manner as to put it beyond all doubt that he had seen it: it is also wonderful that Ridolfi makes no mention of a portrait of the Signora Laura, which was done some years after the death of Lucretia. My doubts (says Ticozzi) about the portraits of Laura Eustochio and the Duchess Eleanora, ceased the 31st January 1816, when I saw, at the house of Count Leopold Cicognara, to whom the arts are so much indebted, the portrait of the former. This (according to the account given of it) is the picture in the Louvre, commonly called Titian's Mistress.* It is like a servant-maid or country-girl.

* It cannot therefore be old Palma's daughter Violante.

In July 1521, Antonio Grimani, a man respected not less for his great age (being more than eighty-five) than for his political and moral virtues, succeeded to the long reign of the Doge Loredano. Titian soon complied with the obligations of his office, painting him in the act of being presented by St Mark and St Antony to the Virgin Mary; a picture which, for the novelty of invention and for the beauty of all the figures, particularly that of the Doge, which appears as if breathing, was considered the best thing in that sort of painting which had ever been done.

At this time, in order to leave his country and friends a living memorial of himself, he presented to the family of Titian Vecelli, his cousin, his own portrait, which was perhaps the first he had done of himself: a portrait the more valuable as it shows him in the flower of his manhood; while all the others that we have of him, not excepting those executed by other artists, represent him in a rather advanced age. Of so precious a memorial, which was however preserved with jealous care by the family as an inalienable property,* there only remains a

* This portrait, and a copy of the Venus and Adonis, were in the common division of that family declared to be common property, as the incomparable and precious gift of their relation Titian.

copy at Venice, which is a tolerably good one, the original having passed in 1728, or soon after, into the royal gallery of Florence, who obtained it by means of Marco Ricci, a Bellunese painter.

The fate of the second is not known; the first is said to have been sold, in 1728, to Marco Ricci, by a certain Osvaldo Zuliano, who made a bad use of his quality of guardian to Alexander Vecelli. Under cover of having it valued by a professor of the art in Venice, having taken it there, he pretended to have it sent back to Cadore, because it was found to be of no value, by means of a person who never made his appearance. Shortly after his ward discovered that it was in the gallery at Florence, and all the fraud was laid open to him. Having lost all hope of recovering the picture, he claimed the value of it from the treacherous guardian, I know not with what success.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DEATH OF FATHER URBANO BOLZANIO, AN INTIMATE FRIEND OF TITIAN, AND THE ELECTION OF DOGE ANDREA GRITTI — HIS PORTRAIT—PICTURE OF THE ST PETER MARTYR—BATTLE OF THE GHIARADADDA, PAINTED IN THE GREATER COUNCIL-CHAMBER—OTHER WORKS ABOUT THE YEAR 1527, IN VENICE AND ELSEWHERE.

In 1523, Titian lost in F. Urbano Bolzanio a respected friend, to whom, more than to any one else, he was indebted for the most serviceable protection of Andrea Gritti, created Doge a short time before Urbano died. And it is not moreover far from the truth, that from this most learned old man, who boasted of having in him a friend and fellow-citizen, he received advice and directions for the study of the remains of Greek sculpture, some of which were in Venice, left in the greatest neglect; besides a number of others, of which Urbano had a thorough knowledge as of things of

great value, which he had seen in the Levant, and also more particularly at Rome and Florence.*

And in consequence of the obligation annexed to the office of La Sensaria, and the very great regard he professed for the new Doge, he painted him in a large picture, with many other figures of Saints, in the same way as the portrait of the Doge Grimani, and in a beautiful manner, which appeared to Vasari and every body who saw it, a most wonderful attempt. This, unhappily, being placed in the hall of the college, perished with other valuable pictures in the fire of 1576.

About this time Titian painted the St Peter Martyr, of which a circumstantial account has been already given.†

Although already rich in the excellent works

* Urbano Bolzanio, as may be seen in the Life published of him in the Literary History of the Department of Cadore, had written down in a journal all that he remarked in literature or the fine arts, in his travels through Greece, the Levant, Italy, and particularly all that had been effected by the Medici in Florence, where he remained some time as tutor to Giovanni de Medici, who was afterwards Leo X.

† Ridolfi relates a tradition of his time, to the purport that Pordenone and old Palma had begged to do a picture of St Peter Martyr in competition with Titian; and that a small sketch by Palma was preserved for a long time in the Palace Contarini di S. Samuele. With regard to the first, both his age and the rivalry manifested at that time against Titian render this tradition, if not

of the Bellini, Giorgione, Albert Durer, and of Titian himself, this picture surprised Venice to such a degree, that there was no follower of the ancient school, however zealous, who did not allow its pre-eminence; nor any artist who was ashamed to become a pupil of Titian: among whom I shall here only mention Paris Bordone, a gentleman of Treviso, and old Palma; be-

true, very probable. Not so with old Palma; for although he was born, not in 1540, as is the general opinion, but shortly after 1500, we know that he was the pupil and friend, and not the rival of Titian. This wonderful work, in which envy found nothing to correct, is perhaps the only modern one which deserves the proud boast written by Zeuxis under some of his works.

This divine work, after having been for almost three ages an object of universal admiration in the church of St John and St Paul at Venice, at the end of the last century, was exiled into a foreign land, where, with the Transfiguration of Raphael, and the St Jerome of Correggio, it proved that the Italians had arrived at that extreme point which seems to put a stop to the progress of human genius, when other nations had but just begun to emerge from barbarism. The picture of St Peter Martyr was restored to Italy in 1816.

This picture was always regarded with an eye of extreme jealousy by the Seignory of Venice, as one of the rarest ornaments of that noble city. For the fraternity of St John and St Paul being seduced by the liberal offer of eighteen thousand crowns made them by a certain Daniel Nis, the Senate forbade the sale under pain of death.

> "Dis dotto mille scudi sta exquisita
> Zogia da Daniel Nis fu negoziada,
> Ma chì comanda ghe tagie la strada,
> Col dir, lasselà la, pena la vita."—Boschini.

cause they were the first whom our artist admitted among the number of his pupils, that is, as persons whom he certainly liked to have about him, and to assist him in works of little importance, but not as scholars who might oblige him to give them regular instructions.

There still remained in the hall of the Grand Council-chamber room for another large history piece; wherefore the Doge Gritti ordered Titian to do there the unfortunate battle of Ghiaradadda, in which he had so great a share. This history, according to Vasari, turned out to be the best of the pictures which were in that hall; and was not finished, as will be hereafter seen, till the year 1537. Reserving my account of it till that time, I will now mention two rather valuable pictures, which he did on canvas, as he mostly used to do, one for the church of Zoppe, a mountain village of Cadore; the other for the church of San Giuseppe di Belluno. In the first he represented the Virgin seated in a dignified manner on a high stool, with the child naked at her breast, who is extending his hands to his mother in such a sweet manner, that the innocent affection of infancy could not have been better expressed. St Anne, a venerable old woman, seated at the feet of the Virgin, is turning with a look of love

to the child above her; and St Mark, standing on her right, and St Joachim on the other side, covered by a large rich garment, assist wonderfully in giving symmetry to the picture. There is observable in these two Saints such a chastened severity of design, and such a hardness of contour, as would make one incline to think it to be a work of his early youth, when, according to general opinion, he still retained much of his master's style, if we did not know that this picture was done in pursuance of the will of Joseph Palatini, dated 1526; besides that the carefully-observed costume of the dresses of the Apostle and the Jewish Joachim, and the faces more nobly expressed than those of his earlier years, would be sufficient to place it among the works of his improved taste. If in the midst of so many merits, any thing could be desired, it would be that there were more life in the Virgin; but this defect, if indeed it be a defect, is largely compensated by a certain air of tranquil repose which inspires you with silent respect.*

* This picture, four feet high by three, remained in perfect preservation till 1806, when the inhabitants suspecting that it was destined to enrich the gallery at Paris, having enclosed it in a case of wood, concealed it in a damp vault. Taking it up some months after, as some of the paint had adhered to the wood, these good

The other picture, representing the Divine Redeemer, is in a grander style. He is, shortly after his birth, lying naked in a white basket. This delicate child, to which, without swerving from the truth, Titian gave a form and proportions somewhat more handsome than children just born usually have, discovers that developement and that free motion which we find in the other more grown-up children of Titian. I wish the critics would observe this, who blame the best Italians, and do not spare the Greek artists, for having given to infants the articulate proportions of grown-up people; as I wish it to be attentively considered by the passionate admirers of the old style, who accuse Titian of not having known how to ennoble what he saw finest in nature; and all must agree, that without going beyond the bounds of life, he represented it still more beautiful than it was wont to be.* Near her divine Son

people entrusted it to an unskilful painter, who however did not touch the uninjured parts, whence the side Saints, the Child, and nearly all the body of St Anne remain perfect. The head of the Virgin is entirely effaced. The roughness of the roads and the two days's journey to Zoppe are amply repaid by the beauty of the picture, which so many have praised, and so few have seen.

* The Flemish painters particularly, who never understood fine forms, nor cared to deviate from the things which nature offered them, find fault with the ancients for having done children altogether different from what they are naturally.

stands Mary, in that submissive, modest attitude, which becomes a virgin-mother, who is not ignorant of the divine calling of her wonderful child. On one side are two shepherds reverently prostrating themselves, than whom you would say you had never seen any thing more natural, so well is expressed in them the character of that charming simplicity which we please ourselves with regarding as the exclusive attribute of a pastoral life. The head of St Joseph, standing near the child, inspires respect, which is increased by his age and by the deep colour of his dress; a colour judiciously adopted by the skilful artist, in order, without any additional studied artifice of dark shadows, to carry this figure farther behind the others. On the threshold of the open, deserted cottage, are seen the two symbolical animals which the artist has marked faintly, in order to give greater prominence to the principal figures. I will say nothing of the three little angels which are descending on a light cloud from heaven to announce so great felicity to the world; for universal consent gives Titian the glory of having drawn the most lovely children in the world. The landscape which fills up the back-ground, presents a country such as is seen in temperate climates at the decline of autumn, when, having lost the freshness of vegetation, it

still shows you the retreating smile of the year. A trembling and faint light illumines the depth of the horizon, bounded by the dark mountains, and is slowly gaining on the declining azure of the sky. Some streaks of an uncertain fog which is spreading along the sides of the mountains seem to pass away before the eyes of the spectator, and the dark leaves of two young holm-trees seem agitated by the wind, the precursor of morning. This dubious light, which at first showed only some of the elevated parts of the country, grows stronger: already you seem to see a flock of sheep going from the fold to pasture; every thing seems to be animated and to turn to beauty before your eyes. The morning-sun of a fine day already shines brightly in the horizon. This morning, symbolical of that which rises to dissipate the darkness of the long night; that distant shepherd whom you see carrying on his shoulders the stray lamb; the other two, who are now waking from sleep near that bush, are appropriate images for the argument with which Scripture furnished the fruitful fancy of the artist. Every thing in this picture was well considered, every thing was necessary. A few figures will suffice for a philosophical painter to represent a moving action, which entirely occupies the mind of the specta-

tor; or if it be capable of any other feeling, it is that Titian was the greatest painter of nature.* I do not know that any of the numerous admirers of his landscapes, who have accurately pointed out their merits and their skilful execution, have yet undertaken to consider them with respect to the very great advantage which the artist knew how to obtain from them, by making them serve as a ground-work to the story he proposed to represent.

* This picture, now the property of the author of the *Lives of the Vecelli*, eight feet high by four and a half, has been in many places retouched by an inexpert restorer; but there are still many parts perfect. The figures are of the size of life; and the landscape is so fresh that you would say it had not been long done.

courses and learned disputes on literature and the fine arts.* That singular man, Peter Aretin, was, as every body knows, of a ready

* In reference to this, I will here insert a passage from a letter of Francesco Priscianese, put at the end of the six books of the Latin Language, printed in Venice by Bonarelli, in 1553. "I was invited on the 1st of August to celebrate that sort of Bacchanal feast, which is called the *Ferrare Agosto*, (why I don't know) although we had a long conversation about it in a delightful garden belonging to Messer Titian Vecelli, a most excellent painter, as every body knows, and a person truly fit to provide with his affability every honourable entertainment. With the said Messer Titian were assembled, as like always desires like, some of the most rare geniuses that are at present in this city; and of ours principally M. Peter Aretin, a new miracle of nature, and next to him, the great imitator of it by the chisel, as the provider of the entertainment was with the pencil, Messer Jacopo Tatti, called Il Sansovino, and Messer Jacopo Nardi, and myself. Thus I was the fourth part of such great wisdom. Here before they spread the tables, as the sun, though the place was shaded, still made the force of its beams to be felt, the time passed in the contemplation of the living representations of the most excellent paintings, of which the house was full, and in talking about the true beauty and loveliness of the garden, which every one was singularly pleased at and admired. It is situated at the farthest part of Venice on the edge of the sea, looking over to the lovely isle of Murano and other beautiful places. This part of the sea, as soon as the sun was gone down, was covered by a thousand gondolets, adorned with the handsomest ladies, and resounding with divers harmonies, with vocal and instrumental music, which till midnight accompanied our delightful supper. But returning to the garden, it was kept in such fine order, and so beautiful, and consequently so highly praised, that the resemblance which came into my mind to the pleasant gardens of St Agatha, so rushed upon

and sharp wit, and Titian and Sansovino were very pleasant people; all three were easy speakers, and all well acquainted with every thing relating to literature and the fine arts, although the former had never exercised his hand at the last; and the others knew no more of literature than was highly advantageous to them in their profession. Nor did they confine their friendship to that, but at every opportunity and without any ceremony assisted each other by mutual good offices, not only in the way of their studies, but in all their wants, just as if they had been brothers.* Both Titian and

my memory, with my desire of seeing them and you, my dear friends, that, for the greater part of the evening, I could scarcely determine whether I was at Rome or in Venice. In this way arrived the hour for supper, which was in no way less excellent or worse ordered, than it was plentiful and well-furnished, besides the finest dishes and wines; and all the pleasures and enjoyment were in unison with the quality of the time, of the persons, and of the entertainment. Being now, at length, set down to the dessert, behold your letters arrive; and because, in praising the Latin language, the Tuscan was blamed, Aretin got angry, and had he not been checked, I think he would have vented one of the most cruel invectives in the world, calling in a rage for ink and paper; although he did not neglect uttering a great part of it by word of mouth. However, the supper ended pleasantly."

* "To you, divine man," writes Aretin to Titian, "I shall say nothing more; for we two being one, thanking you would be superfluous." Lett. Fam. vol. iv. He repeats the same thing in a hundred places. The endeavours of Aretin in favour of Sansovino

Sansovino were moreover accustomed to consult with Aretin about their works, as a man endowed with the purest taste, and who was wont to give them most useful advice.* Not long after, Aretin wished to have his own portrait taken by the hand of Titian, which was done in 1528; and this is the one, I believe, that Aretin presented to Duke Gonzaga, since the other done of him at the request of the printer Marcolino, was also in 1551 in the possession of this their common friend;† and

are well known, when, in 1545, the vaults of the library gave way; as we have certain proofs of the kind offices of Titian with Charles the Fifth, to assign Adria, the daughter of Aretin, a dowry, and propose him for a cardinal. We shall see in more places than one what Aretin did for Titian; so much so indeed, that it was a common opinion that it was to his pen that Titian owed the high estimation to which he had risen. "Which friendship," says Vasari in his life of Titian, "was very useful and honourable even to Titian, for it made him known as far as his pen reached, and especially to princes and persons of importance." And Francesco Terzo, a Bergamese engraver, wrote to Aretin: "It is owing to your pen and your favour, that the works of Titian have that reputation and obtain the great reward they so well deserve."

* "TO MESSER JACOBO DEL GALLO: (FROM ARETIN).

"I am not ignorant of painting; on the contrary, Raphael, Fra. Bastiano, and Titian have attended carefully to my advice, for I am somewhat skilled in ancient and modern productions."

† "There Titian shows the excellence of his unrivalled genius in the portrait, which in the midst of Kings and Emperors hangs

that which he afterwards sent to Duke Cosmo, when he was just raised to the government, has not the distinguishing marks which Ridolfi gives the other painted in 1528, which has a crown of laurel in the right hand, and a flat cap with a plume of feathers fastened by a gold clasp.

Ridolfi insists also that before 1530 Titian painted the portrait of Don Diego Urtado Mendozza and his Mistress, of which we shall speak in its proper place.* He also drew the

in the chief wardrobe of the Duke of Florence; and in Mantua is likewise one by his hand, also among princes, painted in a fine manner, &c."—Letter from Marcolino, dated 1551, in the "Collection of Letters from different people to Aretin," printed in two volumes, by Marcolino, 1551-2. This picture is in the Gallery at Florence, which having the appearance of a man of mature manhood and no more, must have been done before 1535. In this portrait Aretin has but little beard; he holds in his hand a pair of gloves, and is decorated with a large gold-chain, which descends from his neck upon the breast; this was not in the portrait of 1528.

* From the two sonnets of Aretin, and from the letter which accompanied the one he sent Mendozza for the portrait of his Mistress, we learn that Mendozza was painted at full-length of the size of life; that the artist painted his lady without having seen her, and that the poet praised the portrait without ever having seen it or the original. It must be allowed that Mendozza was a man of singular merit, if for nothing else but his eccentricity. As to the date of the picture, I have followed Ridolfi, though the not seeing the copy of his sonnet sent by Aretin to Marc Antonio d' Urbino, till 1540, or the sonnet to the beautiful unknown till 1542, makes

portrait of Parma, his physician, a very fine specimen, which is at present in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna, and also of the Curate of the Minor Friars, who was Confessor to Titian and Peter Aretin (as we shall see by and by) and one of an

us suppose this picture to be of a later date than Ridolfi assigns them.

" TO MENDOZZA.

" Who would doubt, Sir, of the strangeness of your proceeding, considering the sonnet which you have made me compose upon a portrait of which you only show me the veil of silk which covers it, like a relic? But as I am sure my verses do not contain in them so much good as the lady discovers of herself, which Vecelli *without seeing the original* has there painted the resemblance of, I beg pardon of the whimsical subject given me. In the meanwhile this is the way in which I have done it:—

" Furtivamente Tiziano e Amore,
Presi a gara i pennelli e la quadrella,
Due exempli han fatto d' una donna bella,
E sacrati al Mendozza, aureo Signore.
Ond' egli altier di sì divin favore,
Per seguir cotal Dea come sua stella,
Con ceremonie appartenenti a quella,
L' uno in camera tien, l' altro nel core.
E mentre quella effigie e quest' imago
Dentro a sè scuopre, e fuor cela al altrui,
E in ciò che più desia meno appar vago,
Vanta il segreto che s' ascende in lui;
Che s'ognun è del fuoco suo presago,
Ardendo poi non sa verun dì lui.
Chi vuol veder qual Tiziano Apelle
Fa del arte un tacita natura,
Miri il Mendozza si vivo in pittura,
Che nel silenzio suo par che favelle.

old Senator of the Grimani family. But the most admirable of all was the portrait of the Lady Gattina, whom he painted in such a noble and charming style, that nobody could look at it without feeling a soft emotion, so great was the regularity of her features, the beauty of the colouring, the grace of her eyes and ruby lips. He also did some histories in half-figures, representing Cornelia fainting in the arms of Pompey, Lucretia and Tarquin, and the celebrated Roman Charity; he painted all these before he was sent for by the Emperor to Bologna.* But the most celebrated work

Moto, spirto, vigor, carne, ossa e pelle
Li dà lo stil che in piedi lo figura,
Tal ch'ei ritratto esprime quella cura
C'hanno dì lui le generose stelle.
Dimostra ancor nel sembianza vera
Non pur il sacro illustre animo ardente,
E delle virtù sue l'eroica schiera," &c.

* In the Imperial Gallery of Vienna are preserved, as Titian's, two pictures of Lucretia, in the act of avenging on her innocent bosom the violence committed by Tarquin; the most valuable of these by far is that which has the inscription—" Sibi Titianus faciebat." That either of them is the one of which Ridolfi speaks, is what I cannot assert. It is known that Titian always kept many works by him, to make presents on occasion to his friends and the great Lords: of these he left a great number in his house at the time of his death; and it is impossible to fix the precise date at which all of them were done. The anonymous author of his life informs us, that Lord Arundel, the Earl of Surrey, possessed in the

that Titian did in 1528 or 1529 at the latest, was the picture of St Giovanni Eleemosynario, for the greater chapel of that Saint's church at the bridge of the Rialto.* He painted him in one of the dearest exercises of virtue, distributing money among the indigent who surround him. The figures in this picture are full of truth and life, and all put in most becoming attitudes; and in the face and movements of the Saint are seen, expressed in a wonderful manner, compassion and a lively desire of alleviating the pains of many unhappy wretches, who are stretching out to him their supplicating hands.

Nor was the picture of Christ supping with Cleofas and Luke less beautiful or varied, which he painted about this time for a gentleman of

middle of the sixteenth century, a Roman Lucretia violated by Tarquin, from the hand of Titian, in which picture was represented the unbridled passion of the latter, the resistance of Lucretia, and the infinite grief with which she involuntarily submits to his wishes. And this might be the one described by Ridolfi; for both those in the Imperial gallery represent her after the perpetration of the crime.

* That he painted this picture before 1530, is clear from what will shortly be said in due order about Pordenone, who, when Titian returned from Bologna, had undertaken to paint a rival picture in the same church, intended to surpass the other; of this we shall have occasion to speak in this chapter.

the Contarini family: this work seeming to that honourable person too valuable to remain as it were unknown in a private house, was by him presented to the Senate, as a useful study for young artists, and at the same time a singularly fine ornament to the Ducal palace. Zanetti thinks that Titian made a copy of this fine picture, which afterwards passed into the gallery of the King of France. He observes, moreover, that he had introduced some alterations, among which the most remarkable was the head of St Luke, which, in the copy, is that of a stout, beardless man, while, in the original, he was represented as old, and having a long, flowing beard. Titian was not very scrupulous in his copies; and it was often no fault of his, for he could not always decently refuse to comply with the intreaties of those who, charmed with some work of his, wished by all means to have one like it.

A beautiful and varied argument, giving scope to divers affections, was presented to the painter in the scriptural story of Christ's famous Judgment on the Woman taken in Adultery. The moment of action our artist chose to represent, is that in which, having written with his finger on the ground the words which

ought to fill the accusers with confusion, the divine Redeemer invites the by-standers to read them. One of the accusers is already stealing off unobserved; while another, who is nearer the fatal words, is bending down to read them. On the other side of Our Saviour stands a personage, the richness of whose dress and his advanced age conciliate respect, who also seems extremely desirous of knowing the verdict. Others at a greater distance are questioning those who are within reach of the writing. The accused, covered with shame, remorse, and fear, shows by her downcast look, and by her arms folded on her breast, the agitation of her mind; but the open air which is seen in her face tells you that she is not habituated to crime; and prepossessing you in her favour, calls your attention to the Divine Judge, whose amiable sweetness induces you to hope for every thing. The bold, haughty appearance of the armed soldier, to whose custody the timid delinquent is committed, increases the compassion for her.

This solemn judgment, as every body sees, must easily bring round Jesus many individuals of different sex, age, and condition; some as accusers, others influenced by the character

of the new Judge, and many by a sentiment of pity for the unhappy woman. Of this the artist took advantage with wonderful skill, making an infinite variety in the heads, attitudes, dresses, and expressions, without disturbing the fine harmony which forms one of the most distinguishing characters of the Titianesque style; and which is likewise indicative of that silent *Unus post alium exibant* —of the sacred historian. The man (of mature manhood) who stands behind Our Saviour is particularly remarkable for the grand and natural lineaments of his face, and for his singular dress; and he seems quite a stranger to the passions of the other by-standers. This is a portrait, I have no doubt, of some friend of Titian's, drawn from the life.

At some distance from the accused, is seen a group of beautiful women, who are discoursing with each other about her mischance; the head-dress of the two nearest is very judicious and pleasing. The dress of all is elegant and simple, showing the slightness of the form without hiding it in the least. The large building which rises on the right of Our Saviour is meant for the portico of the Temple of Jerusalem; whence, being placed on the summit

of a hill, the eye ranges over a landscape covered with the ruins of ancient edifices. More distantly are scattered elegant monuments, among which rises a pyramid; and at last, a line of azure mountains closes the extreme horizon.*

It was not long before Titian felt the effect of his recent friendship contracted with Peter

* Of this renowned picture there must have been more than one duplicate made, unless we wish to suppose them two or three copies of the same merit as the original. It is five feet high, by about eight broad, with figures rather less thau life. The celebrated miniature painter, D. Giulio Clovio, did a fine miniature copy of it in 1531 or 2, at the farthest, which authorizes me in supposing it a work anterior to 1530. Giorgio Vasari, in his life of Giulio, says, that the latter having escaped from the sacking of Rome, which took place in May 1527, at the end of a year entered among the regular canons, "that after three other years he copied the story of the Woman taken in Adultery, with a good number of figures; which was all done from a picture which about that time was painted by that most excellent painter Titian Vecelli." The expression *about that time*, as every body sees, must not be taken in too strict a sense, the more so as Clovio, being at a distance from Venice, where the picture was done, could not have it just afterwards at his disposal to copy.

Agostino Caracci, a great admirer of Titian's, painted a picture on the same subject; but anticipated by him, was obliged to represent the action after the acquittal of the accused, and agreeably to historical truth, to place nearly all the persons in the act of departing, a moment much less felicitous, because with the action have ceased the different passions and that uncertainty which assists so much in giving life and motion to the figures.

Aretin, who not so much for the intrinsic merit of his works, as for his bold and free censure of the vices of the great, had acquired not only their favour, but indulgence for his abuse; and experienced their beneficence. Charles the Fifth and Clement the Seventh having been reconciled after their late mutual injuries, and both with a numerous retinue having met at Bologna towards the latter end of the year 1529, Aretin contrived that Cardinal Hippolito de' Medicis should send for Titian there, to draw the portrait of the Emperor, who to clear himself from the opinion which the fierce countenances of his soldiers had made the Italians conceive of his roughness and cruelty, had come with a most splendid train, and boasted of doing every thing that became a magnificent and generous sovereign. Titian profited of so rare an opportunity of making more universally known how much he could do in his art, and painted the Emperor completely armed, and in every way so like nature, that he drew many people into a mistake, who thinking it at first sight the Emperor himself, paid their respects to it.* With this wonderful work

* "He painted Charles," says the anonymous writer, "in white armour, upon a very high-spirited charger, and placed him at the

Charles was so pleased, that besides rewarding him liberally, he would never, from that time forward, be painted by any one else. It is not certain whether it was on his second visit to Bologna that our artist drew the portraits of Antonio da Leva and the Marquis of Guasto, the most excellent generals of Charles the Fifth; for by a letter from the Marquis to Aretin, dated November 1531, it appears that he at that time knew Titian, and wished that he should go and meet him at Correggio. In fact, the Marquis was till his death a friend and admirer of Titian, whom he assisted, as we shall see further on, with his own credit and bounty.

Titian, on his return to Venice, found that Pordenone, patronized by many gentlemen,

end of a room on the ground-floor. Here was seen the majesty of the Emperor with the usual disposition, drawn in a manner like life, and the beautiful motion of the horse, so that nothing was wanting but the breath of life, and this might also be supposed to be there."

Ridolfi says of this first portrait of the Emperor: "He represented him of majestic beauty, adorned with glittering armour, sprinkled with precious ornaments, mounted on a bay horse, starred in the front of his head, and richly caparisoned, who, proud of so noble a burden, with a haughty air, breathing a generous fire from his nostrils, champed his gold-bit, standing in an attitude of proudly touching the earth. And so naturally was the generous monarch painted, that the picture being placed at the entrance of a portico, it was at first sight thought to be the Emperor; and Charles himself was astonished at seeing such a faithful resemblance."

was entrusted with a picture in the church of S. Giovanni di Rialto, that he might put himself on a footing with Titian, he having painted a short time before in the same church, as we have noticed, a picture of the titular Saint; but with whatever study and diligence Pordenone applied himself to it, he remained inferior, far inferior, as was by common consent allowed, to his rival. This first trial, though little successful, was not sufficient to convince Pordenone of the superiority of Titian, and was the beginning of that shameful contention which Regillo pushes beyond the bounds of sense and decency; for while he was painting the choir of St Stephen's, he is said to have always had his sword and shield in readiness, which would imply that his enemy lay in wait for him. It appears however that Titian cared little about such idle things, whether to show his contempt for his competitor, or whether he feared to expose himself to that ridicule which always attaches itself to the rivalry of artists and men of letters, when relinquishing the arms of their profession, they descend to personalities.

In the meanwhile, Titian was painting a magnificent picture for *Santa Maria degli Angeli* of Murano, in which, to give Venice a splendid

proof of his talents, he painted an *Annunciation* of wonderful beauty. But whether the price he asked for it (five hundred crowns) appeared to them who had ordered the work excessive, or because they were allured by the moderate terms of Pordenone, who offered a picture of equal excellence for two hundred crowns, they incautiously refused one of the finest and most elaborate works that Titian ever did in his best years. And thus the avarice of some one lost Italy one of the finest productions of art; for Titian, offended by such a miserable and ungrateful proceeding, would not sell the picture at any price; and in 1537 made a present of it to the Empress Isabella, who, surprised by the excellence of the work, showed the artist her full acceptance of it by a gift of two thousand crowns.

In the summer of 1531, Titian made a long stay in his native place, where he painted, for the chapel of the Palatini family, St James the Apostle with two other Saints.* Of this picture there remains no trace; but there is still preserved in Domegge, although injured by

* This picture, when the ancient parish-church was demolished, was carried by the master of the chapel, Matthew Palatini, into his own house, whence it was missed in 1761 without any one's knowing its fate.

time, and still more so by the profane pencil of an inexperienced artist, the magnificent Gonfalone (banner) which he painted for the parish-church of his native place. Upon a golden throne, entwined with garlands and sprinkled with the freshest flowers, is majestically seated the Queen of Heaven, drest in the richest robes, which, without concealing in the least the beauty of her form, lightly cover all her lovely limbs. The white veil which with easy negligence falls from her head on her shoulders, appears through modesty somewhat folded over her swelling breast, with that amiable simplicity of artifice which Titian alone knew how to express. The delicate skin of the naked child which is in her lap, acquires grace and spirit and a reflected lustre from his mother's dress, which glitters as though it were really gold. Three boys, partly naked and partly gracefully covered with green and red silks, are seen near the foot of the throne in most beautiful and varied attitudes. Of these, one is playing with great delight upon a cittern, and not at all minding his companions, who, in a childish way are offering the Virgin garlands of flowers and grass. Thus these boys are honouring the Queen of Heaven in a manner suitable to their age, while two handsome

young men, kneeling at the side of the throne, with their hands gently folded over their breasts, and their eyes cast down to the ground, manifest in so pious a way the sentiments of their heart, that one cannot look at them without participating in their love.*

Titian at this time enriched Cadore with two other pictures, which were placed in the churches of Candide and Vinigo. That in the former is of the most simple composition, representing Our Lady with the Child in her lap, seated on soft pillows, near whom stands an Angel with spread wings playing on a cittern. The short wings are remarkably pretty, from the variety of colour and from the natural way in which they are fastened to the shoulders; they are not, however, so short as to

* From an original document, which I saw at the house of the very learned Signor Taddeo Jacopi di Cadore, I learnt that Titian finished this noble work at the beginning of his forty-fifth year, which answers to 1531. This picture is five feet eight inches high by two feet seven inches broad. Titian did few things even in the flower of his age that can vie with this; and therefore the inhabitants, aware of its great worth, intreated Titian a few years after to send his son Horatio, then twenty years old, to make a copy of it, which they might make use of in processions, wishing to preserve the original with all the care it so well deserved. It was in 1765 presented by the parish to Archdeacon John Baptist Barnabas, who deposited it in a private chapel erected by him in Domegge.

be insufficient to support that airy figure, to whom the artist perhaps gave (more than his usual custom was) an easy and light motion.* The other picture seems a somewhat free copy of the preceding, except that to fill up the empty places of the larger picture, or because those who ordered it chose to have it so, he has added on each side of the Virgin, St John the Baptist and St John the Evangelist.†

* This picture, four feet high by two, is still to be seen in tolerable preservation, but the hues have lost much of that brightness and mellow truth of colouring, which are still preserved in Titian's other works.

† I have before observed, that Titian often copied the same work; and that he sometimes showed poverty of invention, imitating the original with needless frequency, is an old charge, from which he cannot easily be defended, without having recourse to the great difficulty of continually varying the same subjects, or without blaming the obstinacy of those who wished to have by all means such (and such) a work of his and no other. Raphael, after the period of his early youth, always worked for great personages not altogether ignorant of art, and for places frequented by the flower of men of letters and artists; and must, therefore, have been more cautious to avoid such defects. But Titian painted for eighty years, and did many things for people of every rank and of every place; and called upon to do pictures for churches situated among the rugged mountains of his native country, which would not be seen by half a dozen people skilled in the art in as many ages, he became less scrupulous in making duplicates of the same composition. This, however, he did not attempt when working for great people and cities. I do not however mean to clear him from this imputation; so much the more, as he had wherewith to live comfortably without bringing the profession into contempt.

A work more elaborate, and certainly one of the best Titian ever did, is a picture of St Andrew and St Sebastian, placed in one of the side-chapels of the parochial church of Mel, in the district of Belluno. The figure of the Apostle Andrew is in the grandest manner that this judicious painter ever practised; it is that of a man of a grave and venerable aspect, who in mature old age still preserves the vigour of manhood. His complexion is somewhat brown and sun-burnt, as becomes one, who from the laborious occupation of fishing was called to sustain the duties of an Apostle; the muscles are boldly expressed, the red veins strongly marked, the throat large, and the wide forehead furrowed with deep wrinkles. The shaggy eye-brows, the white beard flowing down on his bosom, the large folds of the coarse drapery and its deep colour, add a degree of grandeur

Those who aspire to be excellent in the art, should labour much less for gain than for glory; being careful how they put forth any thing, which they themselves, when doing it, know to be inferior to what they could effect. Let their works be stinted in number, but never in quality. It is true that in works of little importance, painters can avail themselves of the assistance of their pupils: which is more particularly a reason why so many works of excellent masters belie that high character which they had deservedly acquired.

and majesty. At the side of this noble figure stands a most delicate youth, entirely naked, if we may except the white fillet which is wrapped round his loins, with both hands tied over his head to a pillar, who, deeply wounded in the breast by a double arrow, sustains with heroic firmness the anguish of approaching death. He is vainly attempting to conceal the bitterness of his agonies; his sunk eyes, the extension of the muscles of his throat, and the compressed belly, make it evident that he is tormented by intense pain. In vain he strives with his left foot to rise; his right leg already refuses to perform its duty; so that you see him falling, and the rope bending under the weight of his helpless limbs, whilst a mortal paleness which is seen spreading over his whole frame, tells you that the life of the extremities is flying to the heart. Suitably to the character which the sacred historians give us of the noble Levite Sebastian, our artist has represented him without swerving at all from beautiful nature, from which he took the fine form of the limbs, and the dignified expression of the effect: and as nothing low or plebeian is discerned in his heroic suffering, so no violent contortions disfigure his lovely limbs, nor does the

hot and reeking blood flow from the fresh wounds, to alarm the spectator instead of inspiring him with gentle emotions. Titian left to the common herd those violent images, which instead of softening our hearts, make us feel that horror which we experience at the sight of a barbarous murder. This figure alone is of such exquisite beauty as to be enough to confute those who deny to Titian a correct method of design, expression, and dignity. The colouring seems somewhat more florid than was usual with him; but the fault of this may be partly attributed to somebody who washed the picture less cautiously than he ought to have done. Besides the above story, some very fine heads of children deserve notice, which are painted on the bases and capitals of the columns near it, which seem just come from the painting-room of Titian.

Georgio Piloni, an accurate historian of the Bellunese affairs, and who in his youth might have known Titian, enumerating (page 164 of his history) the most noble pictures, which towards the end of the sixteenth century were admired in the churches of Belluno, makes honourable mention of that of the *Manger*, already described, and the *Adoration of the Magi*,

which Titian did for the church of St Stephen. In the state of dilapidation in which this picture is at present, there is still to be recognized the hand of the great master. The head of St Joseph is of an austere and venerable character; and his high colour and dark dress assist wonderfully in giving relief to the group of the Virgin and Child, who are before him. The Virgin is sweetly painted; the action of the child is quick and lively, as becomes a boy of a year old, an age designedly shewn by the painter in the thick and somewhat long hair which covers part of his forehead, and in the formation of his limbs, slighter than are usually given to children just born. Seated at the knee of Our Lady, looking at the gift which one of the *Wise Men* humbly prostrated on the earth is offering, is a dignified old man, whose thick white beard, the majestic turn of his eyes, and the regular and noble form of his face conciliate respect. The landscape is faintly touched, as one which is only supposed to be illuminated by the ray of a single star, which making way through a black mass of clouds acquires greater force and splendor. A blue mountain in the distance is full of nature; along the side of it a streak of mist is seen to move, which is beginning to

grow bright at the appearance of the rising sun.*

In 1531, or a little before, he painted a St John the Baptist, of an age between childhood and youth, to which, differing from the one just described of maturer years, he gave a fresh and delicate complexion and soft curling hair, with gestures suitable to that tender age, pressing to his bosom a lamb done in such a manner, that it wants nothing of being a real one. This beautiful picture, as a most rare performance, was in 1531 sent by Aretin to Count Maximilian Stampa, who was then one of the favourites of the Imperial Minister,† who was so delighted

* This picture, very indifferently engraved, is still to be found among the prints of Teniers. All the figures are there moving from right to left, which makes me think that the print I saw of it was a copy from a superior engraving. The star which gives such a wonderful effect is omitted, as also the mist stealing along the side of the mountain. I have seen in the Bellunese and also at Milan, in the collection of D. Frigerio, early copies of this picture: which shows the estimation in which the original was held, which is now destroyed by the smoke of the lamps and incense, and by some retouching of another hand.

† "TO COUNT MAXIMILIAN STAMPA.

"And I send you a picture by the admirable Titian, by Rossello Rosselli, my relation. And you must not value the gift, but the skill which makes it valuable. Look at the softness of the curling hair, and the beautiful youth of St John; look at the skin so well

with the excellence of the painter, that he wished to have his own portrait done by his hand, in which he was satisfied by Titian, thinking him a personage who might be useful to him with the Ministers of Charles V. And at the same time he also pourtrayed Giovanni Battista Castoldo, equally a favourite with Charles, to whose good offices he owed in part the payment of his pension.

The larger picture which he did in 1531 for Giovanni dall' Armi, his friend, must have been singularly beautiful: in this he represented Jesus Christ on an outer staircase shown to the people by Pilate. Besides these two figures, he painted at the foot of the stairs two gentlemen, in whose faces he pourtrayed Charles V. and Solyman the Emperor of the Turks, as he had given to Pilate the features of Aretin, and his own to a person standing by the side of the two soldiers. The gesture of a

coloured, that the freshness of it looks like snow sprinkled with vermilion, stirred by the pulses, and warmed by the breath of life. Of the crimson dress and the lynx lining I shall not speak; for comparatively it is real crimson and real lynx's fur. And the lamb which he has in his arms has made a flock of sheep bleat at the sight of it, it is so natural.

"ARETIN."

"Venice, 8th October 1531."

boy is particularly fine, who, half-way up the stairs, is endeavouring to hold back a dog who is barking at the crowd, who are advancing in a tumultuous manner.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IN 1532 HE GOES A SECOND TIME TO BOLOGNA, CALLED THERE BY CHARLES V.—AGAIN POURTRAYS THE EMPEROR, THE CARDINAL DE MEDICIS, ARETIN, ETC.—IS INTRODUCED TO THE DUKE OF URBINO AND TO DUKE GONZAGA, WHO TAKES HIM TO MANTUA, WHERE HE DOES DIFFERENT WORKS.—ON HIS RETURN TO VENICE IS VISITED BY THE CARDINAL LORRAINE.—HIS PORTRAIT, AND THAT OF DUKE SFORZA, ETC.—BY THE DEATH OF ALFONZO D'ESTE, HE LEAVES A PICTURE UNFINISHED.—GOES, AT THE DESIRE OF CHARLES, TO ASTI.—AFTERWARDS FINISHES, IN THE DUCAL PALACE OF VENICE, THE BATTLE OF GHIARADADDA.—OTHER WORKS UP TO 1540.

HOSTILITIES between the Turks and the Germanic League having at length ceased, the Pope and the Emperor again met at Bologna in 1532, when Titian was sent for there, and treated with such honour as to excite the jealousy of Charles's courtiers. It is a common opinion, that one morning painting in the presence of

the Emperor, who, himself fond of drawing, saw with extreme pleasure so great a master at work,—the pencil fell from his hand; and Charles picking it up, presented it to the artist; and upon his humbly thanking him for an act of so much condescension, Charles answered,—"Titian deserves to be waited upon by an Emperor."* It has been said also, and affirmed by many authors, that the Emperor, when riding through Bologna, kept to the right hand of Titian, which singular demonstration of open favour so enraged his courtiers, that they represented to him that such familiarity with a painter did not become so great a Prince—to whom, it is said, Charles replied, that he could not always have near him a man like Titian, but that there was never any lack of courtiers and high-born Lords. Some think this happened in Vienna, and not at Bologna; but when he was at the former place, Vecelli was in the intimate confidence of Charles, and one of his knights, known to and loved by the principal ministers, so that he could no longer have been an object for the low jealousy of the courtiers.†

* "Charles V took great delight in painting, and drew tolerably himself, and made as much of Titian Vecelli, that divine painter, as Alexander the Great did of Apelles."—Ludovico Dolce: Life of Charles V.

† The silence of Vasari is not sufficient to destroy the authenti-

He was accompanied to Bologna by Peter Aretin, who was anxious to be admitted to the acquaintance of Charles by the favour of the Dukes of Mantua and Urbino, and of the Cardinal Hippolito, who all esteemed him highly. The latter was the Legate of Clement, and commanded the pontifical troops assisting the Emperor; and as he regarded the Cardinal's purple as a very inadequate compensation for the Signory of Tuscany, accorded also to his younger cousin, Alexander, he was feeding his hopes with the prospect of attaining some principality by means of arms. He, therefore, wished to be painted by Titian, of the size of life, in an Hungarian dress; and afterwards smaller than life, covered from head to foot in very polished armour. He also desired him to do the portrait of Aretin, giving him commissions for other works of greater importance; made him magnificent presents, and invited him with most honourable terms to his court, which, however, from the shortness of his life was never carried into effect.

city of a tradition universally received, which does honour at once to the Artist and to the Monarch. And it is known that the august Charles was wont to grant such distinctions to others; and among these, in 1543, at Verona, to Aretin, who had come there to pay his respects, with the embassy of gentlemen whom the Signory of Venice had sent forward to welcome their illustrious guest.

Nor was the liberality of Charles confined to mere expressions of respect; for he rewarded him for his second portrait by creating him one of his knights, and by allowing him an annual pension of two hundred crowns upon the chamber of Milan without any conditions. The anonymous author already quoted, says, "As soon as his Majesty heard of the arrival of Titian, he had him sought for throughout the city with the greatest diligence; and the following day received him with incredible joy and respect, made him a knight, and settled an annual pension on him." Among the princes who were assembled at Bologna to do honor to the Emperor, was Frederic Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, a man who to political and military talents added a love of literature and the fine arts, and was a most liberal rewarder of their professors: who being particularly delighted with the noble manners and marvellous skill of Titian, wished to have him some time at his court, where he entertained Julio Romano and other renowned artists in a splendid manner. Titian willingly accepted the invitations of so generous a Mecenas, encouraged by Aretin, who, when he was with John de Medicis, had contracted an acquaintance with Gonzaga. In his way to Mantua, Titian saw

at Parma the cupola of St John, painted by Correggio and other pictures of his, which were there held in very little estimation, and he praised them highly: whence, from the reputation Titian had of being an excellent painter, Correggio began to be valued by the less skilful; and the canons of the cathedral no longer demurred at letting him proceed with the cupola of that church, which Correggio, by his talents, rendered the finest in the world. On his arrival at Mantua he began the portrait of the Duke, and afterwards that of the Cardinal his brother, which he did with a truth that had hitherto never been seen there in portrait; nor could the artists of the city attain to any thing like it, though they have many fine ones. These being finished, he ornamented a chamber with the heads of the Twelve Cæsars, taken from pieces of sculpture and ancient medals, which were considered so fine, that Julio himself painted under each of them a history of their actions. These heads, which Ridolfi says passed into the Gallery of the King of England (Philip the Second), have been engraved by Egidius Sadeler. Agostino Caracci wrote on the margin of his copy of Vasari's Lives, opposite the place where the latter observes that Titian made these twelve

heads very fine, "*very fine, and so fine, that nothing can surpass or equal them.*"*

From the kindness of Gonzaga, who entertained him for a long time at Mantua, or rather from his dislike of the journey, which would take him too far from Venice, he had not been able to join the Cardinal Hippolito de' Medicis at Rome, of which the latter appears to have

* Respecting the Twelve Cæsars I will present the reader with an account given by Baldinucci, who, in his life of Bernardino Campi, affirms that Titian only painted the first eleven, and that the twelfth, that of Domitian, was added by Campi, who did four copies of each of the twelve, which were sent as presents to different potentates of Europe. The history of the vicissitudes of these famous paintings is very curious. In the sacking of Mantua, which took place in 1629, during the war about the succession of the Empire, the Ducal palace was divided between the two Generals, Galasso and Aldingher. A portion of the pictures arrived at the Gallery of Prague, which, when Gustavus the Great took that city, were transported to Stockholm; whence his daughter Christina at her abdication removed them, carrying them with her to Rome. After her death Cardinal Azzolini, her heir, became the possessor of them; and when he died, they passed into the Odescalchi palace, the gallery of which was purchased by the Duke of Orleans. Another portion of the Gallery of Mantua, and particularly the Twelve Cæsars, was purchased by James, father of Charles the First, King of England, and after the death of the latter was sold by order of Cromwell. The London papers lately reported that the Twelve Cæsars, bought almost for nothing by a broker at a bankrupt sale, and afterwards recognized as originals of Titian, were by him resold to a rich English nobleman, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten, for the exorbitant sum of eight thousand pounds.

complained. Titian therefore excused himself as well as he could in a letter to "*Messer Vendramo, chamberlain of the Cardinal,*" dated December 1533, in which he protested *that he adored no prince, nor was more anxious to serve any body than his most illustrious Lordship.** And to make up in some measure for his breach of faith, he did in Venice (to send to the Cardinal at Rome) a picture of a beautiful lady, which he felt persuaded would please him; but the Cardinal of Lorraine having arrived at this time in Venice, and going with a view to have his own portrait taken, to visit Titian in his own house, he happened to see the picture intended for Hippolito. With which the prelate was so pleased, that not being by any means able to get it, he intreated our artist not to send it to Rome, before he had done a fac-simile for him. In the meantime he did a sketch for his portrait, which he some time after brought to that perfection which he used to give to the portraits of great personages and his friends; but the Cardinal returning to France, and making no further inquiries about it, Titian applied himself to Roberto Rosso, who being in that prince's service had come on his busi-

* For this letter, see Appendix.

ness to Venice, but up to 1539 all endeavours proved useless; nor do I know how the affair terminated.*

Besides the pictures for the Cardinal Lorraine and Hippolito de' Medici, Titian, while at Bologna, had promised Francis Maria, Duke of Urbino, that he would paint his portrait and that of the Duchess Eleanora, his consort, which were works of stupendous beauty, for which he was magnificently rewarded, as well as Aretin, who celebrated their merits in two complimentary sonnets.† Also Alfonso d'Avalos, Mar-

* I will insert the letter of Roberto Rosso to Peter Aretin, which, in addition to the knowledge it gives us of the irresolution of the Cardinal, is a sincere testimony to the excellence of the work; "I did not forget to lay the application of your Signor Titian before his most reverend Lordship, telling him that I had seen the finished portrait which (so like was it) only wanted motion and speech to be the very person it represented; and that the said Titian waited his Lordship's commands as to what it should please him to have done with it, whether he should send it here, or still keep it by him? To which he answered that he would give me letters, by which he would inform Titian what he had to do."

† Vasari supposes that Titian did the portait of Duke Francesco Maria, when Paul the Third came to Bologna and Ferrara in 1543; that is to say, five years after his death; confounding, according to his custom, the works done for Francesco Maria with those for his son Guidobaldo. But it is certain that Titian, before 1537, had done not only the portrait of Francesco, but also that of his wife Eleanora, which Vasari does not record; this is proved by the following letter written by Aretin in 1537 to Veronica Gambara,

quis of Guasto, not contented with having his portrait taken by the Imperial painter, wished also to have a duplicate of that of his master, that of his own wife, and a large history called the *Allocuzione*;* for which works, as appears

accompanying the above-mentioned sonnets:—"I, most elegant lady, send you the sonnet you requested, which I did for a fancy caused by the pencil of Titian; for as he could not draw a more famous prince, so I ought not to exercise my genius on a less honoured portrait. When I saw it I cited nature to bear witness, and made her confess that art was turned into herself. And this proved by every feature, every hair, every mark; and the colours which painted it do not only show the firmness of the flesh, but discover the strength of the mind. And in the brightness of the armour which he wears, is reflected the red velvet which is placed behind him as an ornament. What an effect has the plume of feathers, which appear so vividly reflected in the polished cuirass of the great chief! Everything, even to the insignia of his different generalships, is natural, particularly that of Ventura, not however so highly finished, except to give a proof of his glory which began to diffuse the rays of valour which made his enemies tremble. Who would say that the marshal's staff which Chiesa, Venice, and Florence put into his hand was not of silver? How great hatred ought death to bear that sacred spirit, which restores people to life after he has destroyed them! His Imperial Majesty well knew it, when at Bologna seeing himself pourtrayed, as it were, alive, he wondered more at it than at victories and triumphs by which one can always ascend to heaven. Now read it with another that follows, and then resolve to praise the wish I have to celebrate the Duke and Duchess of Urbino.

"Venice, 1537."

* Felibien, in his life of Titian, says that in the cabinet of the King of France, there is still preserved by the hand of Titian,

from a letter of his to Aretin, dated November 11th, 1531, he wished Titian to come to Correggio, where he then was. This magnificent lord, who had settled a pension on the immortal author of the Furioso, assigned the same allowance of fifty golden crowns upon the taxes of his castle of Leoni to Titian also, who painted his portrait three times; in Bologna, as Ridolfi and Vasari attest, in the picture of the *Allocuzione*, and in another picture, together with his wife and eldest son, as a Cupid, who was afterwards, in more advanced youth, painted dressed in ancient armour in the same picture. Nor did the fickle Duke of Milan, Francesco Sforza, wish to be behind the other noblemen, and he had his portrait taken by Titian; as also before his death had wished the Marquis of Pescara, not less illustrious for the poetical praises given to his memory by his noble wife, than for his political and military virtues.

But the acquaintances formed in Bologna and elsewhere with the ministers of Charles and with so many Italian princes, had not made our artist forget the obligations of his old

besides some other works, a picture representing the Marquis del Guasto, a lady, and a Cupid. This picture is at present in the Louvre, and an exquisite one it is.

friendship contracted with Alfonso the First, Duke of Ferrara; and he began to compose an allegorical picture, in which a most beautiful girl, naked, accompanied by a man of mature years, is presenting herself in a submissive attitude to Minerva, who, entirely covered in very glittering armour, meets her on the sea-shore. The God of the Sea is seen at a great distance in his chariot drawn by sea-horses advancing towards the shore, attended by a numerous body of Tritons and nymphs: heaven, earth, sea seem to grow beautiful, and laugh at the presence of such powerful deities. The untimely death of the Duke prevented his finishing this fancy of his, probably intended to eternize the memory of his glorious but disturbed reign.* And Duke Hercules, who succeeded his father, was not less generous to Titian. The portrait

* It is not known what became of this unfinished sketch. Vasari mentions it in a manner which makes one suppose he saw it in Titian's house. I have been assured that a first study or sketch of it in ink was preserved up to the beginning of this century in a family at Serravalle, together with some autograph writings of Titian himself; but I have never been able to see either. By a letter of Aretin's, written in 1537 to Nicolo Buonleo, it appears that Duke Hercules had generously rewarded Titian for some works done for his father. "Titian says that since he painted princes, he never received a more princely reward; and I am glad of it for the glory of the Duke of Ferrara, the unostentatious rewarder of merit."

Bologna, Titian had left imperfect in the Hall of the Grand Council-chamber, the story of the battle of Ghiaradadda, which had been entrusted to him by Doge Gritti, after seeing that miracle of art, the St Peter Martyr; nor had he, being obliged to fulfil his promises of infinite works to so many lords, and being afterwards invited to the Imperial camp, been able to resume his task. But on his return to Venice at the end of 1536, he did not leave the picture till he had brought it to such perfection that it surpassed all the other works in that wonderful hall. Vasari bears witness to this, whose short description of it I will add, as the work was lost in 1576. "In this hall he did a battle and the rage of soldiers who are fighting, while a heavy rain falls from heaven: this work, entirely taken from life, is considered the best of all the histories in that hall." The Madonna with two boys belongs very likely to this period, which he painted in fresco at the bottom of the covered staircase which leads from the palace to the church. But the best preserved work in fresco that Titian perhaps ever did, is the St Christopher, painted over the door of the private staircase by which the Doge passed when going from his apartments to the college. This gigantic figure seems almost purposely done to confound

those who, granting him the merit of being the best painter of beautiful women and children, made him out incapable of skilfully designing the forms of men in robust health and used to laborious exercises. The muscles of this colossal naked figure are strongly pronounced, particularly in the wearied parts; the swollen veins, the blood-shot eyes, the lively expression of turning to the wonderful child, under whose weight he no longer can hold out, would be enough to place Titian in the number of the boldest designers, though he had done nothing else resembling it.

At the end of 1538, Titian lost in Doge Andrea Gritti a splendid and affectionate Mæcenas; a loss the more sensible, as the new Doge Pietro Lando, whether by reason of his sickly old age, or whether he was occupied by political cares, did not manifest that fostering protection towards the arts which Gritti and other Italian princes had granted them. In 1539 he did this nobleman's portrait according to the terms of his office; and also for the friendship with which he honoured him, that of Agostino Lando.* Nor in the midst of so many public

* Of the second of these portraits Aretin speaks thus to Count Lando:—"But as it is my duty to requite you, as I do my other benefactors, I will finish by telling you that M. Titian, who con-

and private works of such importance, did he forget his family and country; for whom he did the celebrated picture of St Titian, to be placed in the chapel of that Saint in the parish of Cadore.* In this he represented Our Lady seated on a high stool, with a back of green cloth fringed with gold; who, affectionately bending down, presents her unsullied breast to the divine child, who is in her lap lying on a soft pillow. The air of the Virgin's face is very sweet; and her eyes beaming with affection are fixed on her son, who with a graceful lively motion approaches his mouth to the maternal breast. On one side, kneeling on the ground, is St Andrew, an old man of a venerable aspect, whose bald head and long grey beard of an abundant thickness elicit respect. On the other side is seen St Titian in Pontiff's robes, and behind him a priest holding the crosier of

tinually sees you alive in the portrait, which is full of the spirit infused into it by the divinity of his pencil, returns you the thanks which I also return you for the anchovies you sent us; and the sweet ripe apples resembling the sweetness and suavity of your Lordship's conversation.

"Venice, 15th November, 1539."

* Of this picture, excellently engraved by Valentine Le Febre, Vasari, Ridolfi, and the often quoted anonymous author, have not spoken. It is now in the possession of Signor Taddeo Jacopi, well worthy of possessing it for his love of the arts and his attachment to his country.

the holy Bishop. The painter gave the Virgin a clear blue mantle, and a tunic of a bright red, which separate her entirely from the brown green of the back of the chair. The gold and jewels of the Bishop's mitre, and the priest's cope wrought in silver with figurative emblems, shine and glitter as if they were real. So great was the skill of Titian in colours and their effects, that he could create the most dazzling splendour by a union of the simplest tints. The most common yellow and a whitish grey are here seen converted by his magic pencil into gold and silver. What increases the value of this picture is the finding in it the portraits of Francesco Vecelli and Titian, the former as St Andrew, and the latter as the priest standing by the bishop, who has a white beard and hair; but the face full of robust manhood is such as suits a man of sixty or rather more, which was exactly Titian's age at the time he did this fine work. I shall conclude this chapter with an account of two pictures done for other cities of the Venetian territory, although they were probably not finished till after 1540. I mean the two noble pictures for the church of St Nazzaro at Brescia, and the cathedral of Verona. The former is divided into five compartments; in the largest of which, occupying

the centre, he represented the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The action of the divine Saviour is light, as becomes one who for his own virtue ascends from earth to heaven. Shining with an immortal radiance, he is seen illuminating a sky, loaded with dark clouds, which opening here and there, discover some traces of country faintly lighted by the rising sun. In an attitude becoming people who are awakening from being struck by sudden fear, are seen near the open sepulchre some soldiers clothed in black armour, one of whom, placed in front of the picture, is foreshortened admirably, and without any affectation, to make way for others more behind. The figures in this compartment are of the size of life, and rather less than those of the two lower sides, in one of which he painted St Sebastian, bound like Marsyas to the trunk of a tree; and the rope which ties the right arm cuts the flesh of it deeply, so tender and delicate is it!

In the corresponding picture is seen the warrior St Nazzaro, in the act of kneeling devoutly to our Saviour, behind whom is perceived another armed man with a girdle. The heads of these three figures are very fine, and particucularly that of the kneeling man; but the thighs and legs of St Nazzaro are of a beauty

approaching the *ideal*. The two upper side-compartments represent in half-figures the Virgin and the Angel.

The picture in the cathedral of Verona is more united as well as more varied by the nature of the subject: it represents the Ascension of the Virgin to Heaven; which work was, according to Vasari, considered the finest modern work in the city. Though the argument is the same as he had treated of twenty-five years before in the church of the Frari at Venice, he imitated very few things in the latter. The heads of the Apostles in the new work are very delicately touched, the variations of light and shade are most gradual; whereas in the former he had laboured, by bold strokes and not by minute touches, to adapt his execution to the force of the local light and the immoderate size of the picture.* It is affirmed that in one of the Apostles he pourtrayed Michael Sammicheli, a celebrated Veronese architect, and great friend of his.†

* I again notice this circumstance for those who think that Titian did not paint in dashes till his old age; and when he could no longer unite his colours with the finest shades.

† Ridolfi, in his Life of Titian, says that he did a copy of this picture for a church in Roveredo.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HIS WORKS UP TO 1543—HIS STUDIES FOR PORTRAITS—GOES TO BOLOGNA AND FERRARA, CALLED THERE BY POPE PAUL III—FIRST PORTRAIT OF THIS POPE AND CARDINAL SFORZA.

Some years had already elapsed since Titian was engaged to satisfy the Marquis of Guasto by the large picture in which he was to be represented in the act of haranguing the army; and the latter did not cease making him, by means of Aretin, pressing intreaties, desiring him to come to Rome and finish the work. And by sending him, as earnest of the *Allocution*, another picture, and giving him a description of the singular beauties of the now-finished *Allocution*, Aretin sought to excuse the delay of his friend, till at the beginning of 1541, he was able to send him the work which the skill of the artist, and more his own vanity, made the Marquis so eagerly desire. This picture is hardly noticed by Vasari and Rodolfi; but there is an

animated description given of it by Aretin, in a letter dated November 1540. I will merely add, that among the armed men who were crowning the principal figure, Titian pourtrayed Aretin himself.* Vasari says that he finished this work on his return from Rome to Venice, that is, about the middle of 1546 : but besides the date of Aretin's letter, which shews it to have been completed above five years before, we know that the Marquis died while Titian was at Rome.

In 1540 he also painted Vincentio Cappello, an illustrious Senator and a very partial friend of his ; for which work Aretin composed the sonnet beginning—

" Quel senno illustre e quel valore ardente."

saying that Venice had perhaps never before seen at one time so great a senator and so noble an artist.† Not less beautiful than that

* We learn this from a letter of the printer Marcolino to Aretin : —" And whoso would think me a flatterer, let him look at your likeness in the picture where your more than brother Titian has painted, in a most natural manner, Alfonso d'Avalos, haranguing the army like Julius Cæsar in act and form. Milan runs in the person of all its inhabitants to look at you as a divine and most worthy image."

† Aretin, writing to the magnificent Nicolo Molina, in December 1540, says of this portrait :—" Seeing how admirably Titian has pourtrayed the admirable Cappello, I could not refrain from making the following verse on it :—' It will be more ages than we have

of Cappello, but on a grander and more magnificent scale, was the portrait, which in 1541 he did for Don Diego Urtado Mendozza, at that time Imperial Ambassador to the Signory of Venice, painting him at full-length on foot, which by the testimony of Vasari was a most beautiful figure. And, at the same time, he did for that nobleman the portrait of a lady beloved by him, without having ever seen her; which works Aretin celebrated in two sonnets as we have before seen. After that of Mendozza, Vasari says that he did the portrait of the Cardinal of Trent, then a young man; and another less than life of Aretin at the intreaty of their common friend Marcolino. On this work he employed only three days; and as to the face it appears that he did it exactly like that in the *Allocution* of the Marquis d'Avalos.

But it is time that I should speak of the noble picture which he did this year for the church of Santo Spirito, after having been to law with that monastery for a similar one, which turned out unsuccessfully. In this picture he represented the Descent of the Holy Ghost, in the shape of a flame, upon the Apos-

lived years before God permits this great city to be adorned with so noble a senator and so admirable a painter.'"

tles, who assembled in a chamber with the Virgin, accompanied by two other women, express by various most natural gestures the astonishment with which they are seized, feeling themselves suddenly filled with celestial wisdom. Our Lady is particularly beautiful, who occupying the centre of the picture, is surrounded by the most refulgent beams of a bright glory above her; at the top of which is seen the Dove borne on its white wings, the image of the Holy Ghost. The effect of the light is wonderful, which dazzles, as it were, the eyes of the spectator, and the more wonderful because produced by a simple yellow, declining into a languid orange-colour, which, by degrees, becomes faint as it recedes from the central fire. This year George Vasari came to Venice to do a picture for Giovanni Cornaro, and some things for the monastery of the Calze; on which occasion he says that Sansovino had entrusted to him designs for three oil-pictures, which were to be placed in the gallery of the church of Santo Spirito; which (Vasari having left Venice without doing any thing to them) were committed to Titian. The subjects of these were three histories from the Old Testament, which Vasari, on his return to Venice twenty-five years after, thought

most beautiful, the artist having succeeded in overcoming the difficulty of fore-shortening his figures from beneath. These pictures were, many years after, placed in a recess in the Sacristy of the church of S. Maria della Salute, where they demonstrate that none of the most excellent colourists came at all up to the design of Titian, none of whatever school approached him in the magic of colouring, few in the purity and suavity of his contours.

Obliged to do so great, so important, and so various works, it is no wonder that in some he showed himself inferior, as it happened in an altar-piece which he did about this time, perhaps in too great haste, for the city of Novara. But Titian, though he thought highly of himself, was modest, reasonable, and gentle; and so inclined to gratify his friends, that at the remonstrance of Battista Tornielli he proceeded with great good-will to bring it to that perfection which those who had given the order had expected from the talents of so distinguished an artist.*

* As such a trait of singular courtesy is not very common among the irritable race of poets and painters; and also as too much publicity is given to the story about St Salvator, that Titian, instead of amending it, sent it back with *Titianus fecit, fecit,* written on it: and to render due justice to the gentle and good-tempered

In 1542 Robert Strozzi was at Venice; who tenderly loving a daughter of his, who was a most beautiful and amiable girl of about nine or ten years of age, he gave Titian an order to paint her (a full-length) of the size of life, that he might have near him a picture, which, when she grew up, might recall to him

character of our artist, and that his followers may have an example of rare modesty, instead of intolerance, more to be imputed to the decrepitude of old age than to any thing else, I will add the documents relative to this transaction.

"TO THE MAGNIFICENT MESSER PIETRO ARETINO,

"If your Lordship pleases, you will be able to see what I write to M. Titian. I intreat you to exhort him to the execution of my wish, on which equally depends the recovery of his honour, a thing for which princes and other distinguished personages expose life and their own blood; but he ought not to expose himself to such risks. All that is necessary is to employ a little time, of which, although precious, he ought not in this case to be a niggard, but to give much of it to the excellence of his art, which may attain to some new and true mature birth, and atone for the former miscarriage.

"BATTISTA TORNIELLI.

"Novara."

"TO M. GIOVANNI BATTISTA TORNIELLI.

"I did not delay in making M. Tizian put his hand again to the picture, which you will soon see adorned with that skill, which to say truth it wanted. He has now added the protector of your country armed; and you will see in the guise of cherubims two angels of a celestial beauty and divine favour.

"PIETRO ARETINO.

"Venice, 1542."

the graces and vivacity of her childhood. To this work our artist applied himself with such ardour, as if he was delighted to paint such a beautiful and noble child, that every one swore they had never seen either by the hand of Titian or any body else any thing to equal it. This picture preserved in the Strozzi family at Florence was placed on the day of the festival in the open gallery of St John the Baptist. In this situation it was seen by Lorenzo Magalotti, then a boy of four or five years old, who was so charmed by it, that that beautiful little girl never left his memory. And a bad copy of this so excellent picture coming under his eye sixty years after, his first impression, when a child, came so forcibly into his mind, that he never rested till he found himself in possession of a fine copy of it. His own description of it in a letter to Leone Strozzi, at Rome, dated 1706, is as follows: "I think that a famous original picture of Titian must be there. It is a fine little girl standing, dressed in white (as it appears to me) with a watch depending by a gold chain from her waist-ribbon, which hangs down nearly to her feet. In her hand she has a small cake, from which she is breaking a piece to give to a dog, which she strains to her

breast with her left arm. I should wish to know if the picture is in being, and who has it. Buonarotti has just told me that it was in your house. Now, hear me. I wish to have a copy of it. This wish came into my head in the palace, when the picture was recalled to my memory, which I saw in the hands of my mother's usher, with whom I was in the gallery of St John Baptist on the day of the festival, and it never left my mind, so much did it please me at that age, which, to say truth, must have been about four years, and every part of it is so fixed in my mind that I could paint it; of which, to give you some proof, the little girl is dressed in white, with a chain of gold at her sash, which hangs almost to the ground. To you it appears as if you had caught me in a lie, having said before that the picture came into my mind in the palace. Yes, Sir, so it did; and by a copy most wretchedly patched up, and that only a copy above the waist, which is on a little oval canvas. And add the following to the other proofs of the terrible ascendancy this little girl had over my fantasy. You may suppose that when I was in the church of St John, no one thought of telling me it was by Titian. I remember well, that the usher seeing me

look at it in an ecstacy, said to me in a formal tone: 'that young lady is by the hand of the most skilful man that ever lived;' and I recollect, on that occasion, making the reflection that there must be a great difference in painters."

This romantic old gentleman at length found a copy of his favourite picture, which satisfied him. I do not know (remarks Ticozzi) whether we are to believe in the Greek tales of horses, dogs, birds, deceived by pictures; I do not know that any painter, ancient or modern, carried the illusion to so great a degree; for it is one thing to imitate beasts, fruit, and any thing else, which politeness does not allow us to mention, and deceive beasts or men more ignorant than beasts; and another to represent a well-known person in such a manner, that it seems to those who are perfectly acquainted with the original, alive and true, as Charles the Fifth and Pope Paul the Third; or which leaves in the mind of him who sees it such a profound impression, that fifty years cannot efface it, as happened in the case of Strozzi's daughter. Nor is his great skill to be attributed, as is commonly thought, to the magic alone of his colouring and *chiaro-scuro*; for it was precisely because few or no painters went

through the studies he did, that they could not infuse into their figures that vital spirit which he did into his. The artists who have written on Titian praise in general terms his best productions, yet sometimes appear to suspect him of some extraordinary art; but they were either ignorant of it, or did not care to tell us what it was. It has been said by some one that to give greater force to his portraits he used carefully to finish those parts which varied in one face from another, leaving somewhat neglected the other parts, so that the attention of the spectator is entirely drawn to the characteristic parts of the face. It is true, that without skilful and correct design one cannot draw the portrait of any one so as to be mistaken for the person represented; but Titian went further than this. He sought in the face of the person he was about to pourtray, the characteristic marks of the passions of the mind, of the inclinations and habits; then he marked on the canvas, perhaps somewhat more pronounced than they were in the original, such characteristic marks of the ruling passion. He was, however, accustomed to say, "*that the painter ought in his works to seek out the peculiar properties of things, forming the idea of his subjects so as to represent their distinct*

qualities, and the affections of the mind, which wonderfully please the spectator."

And this is the cause of that perfect illusion which the portraits of Titian were wont to produce; of those indelible emotions which our minds feel in looking at the great works of so great a man, which make him equal or little inferior to Raphael.

That Titian had a profound knowledge of the philosophical part of painting, is demonstrated by the St Peter Martyr; in the figures of which, as every body allows, the emotions of cowardice, terror, ferocity, &c. are vividly expressed; as in the Venus lamenting the departure of Adonis, the presentiment of the approaching disaster, the heroism in the St Sebastian, the penitence in the Magdalen, the magnanimity in Charles the Fifth and others: but an indisputable proof of the study Titian had bestowed on the ethics of painting, is produced in a letter from Aretin to Vasari, in which he mentions having told that noble painter that he had never seen a girl who did not discover some viciousness in her face, except his daughter Adria, whom at the intreaty of her loving father he painted about this time, in the act of threading a needle.

After the portraits of these pretty children,

he also did that of Elizabeth Massola, a beautiful and virtuous lady; and not contented with giving her immortality by his pencil, he also persuaded his friend to celebrate her in a sonnet, which, in my opinion, did not at all answer to the merits of the painter and the noble lady.

The Emperor, alarmed at the immense preparations which King Francis continued to make, and still more at the fresh alliances contracted with some Protestant princes, resolved to pass from Spain into Italy; and thence, as soon as as he had made the best arrangement he could as to the not very secure kingdoms of Milan and Naples, to repair into Germany, where his presence became every day more necessary. Paul the Third, to whom the machinations of Charles were not unknown, saw that fortune could not present him with a more favourable opportunity than this for aggrandizing and strengthening the power of Pier Luigi his son. Therefore, covering his secret designs by giving out that he wished, as the common father of the faithful, to remove the causes which prevented firm peace between such powerful monarchs, he left Rome at the latter end of February 1543, and went to Ferrara and Bologna, hoping there to have a conference

with the Emperor. And whilst Charles skilfully evaded the Pope's projects, putting the thing off from day to day, Paul, by means of the Duke of Urbino, invited Titian to his court to do his portrait; and perhaps also, knowing him to be a great favourite with the Emperor and his principal ministers, he thought he might not be entirely useless to him in his schemes. Titian went there in May; and the Pope was so pleased with his portrait, that he had another taken for Sforza, and obtained Titian's promise to visit him. But he was not equally satisfied with the Emperor, who in the very short congress of Brussels, found means most craftily to decline all his requests. The Pope returned to Rome, and Titian to Venice, satisfied by the former only in words; for the goodness of his disposition did not permit him to accept the office of the *Leaden Seals* to the prejudice of Fra Bastiano who possessed it, and of Giovanni da Udina, who drew from it a pension of eighty ducats on the exchequer. He was abundantly rewarded, however, in the assurance of a benefice for his son Pomponio; a promise which a year after had not been put into effect. And thus it might appear that the Pope had determined not to pay him except in promises or with the property of others.

So miserable a proceeding roused the anger of Aretin, who being then in Verona, entertained and honoured by Charles, could not refrain from publishing the merits of his friend and the shameful neglect of Paul. Vasari pretends that Titian did other works in Bologna for Cardinal Farnese and Cardinal Santa Croce, without saying what they were, or mentioning them in his life, where it would have come in better than in that of Pierino della Vaga; but he probably confounds dates, whence he does not chuse to discourse of it more fully.

Titian and Aretin being again returned to Venice, the latter, alluding perhaps to the indiscretion and boldness of one Franco, wished his friend to paint for him in the cieling of a chamber the stories of Marsyas flayed by Apollo, and of Mercury cutting off the head of Argus, who had published abroad the weaknesses of Jupiter:—histories most excellently adapted for a man who, having in his necessity taken refuge in the house of Aretin, had with base ingratitude exposed his defects in infamous poetry, and dared to say all the ill he could of him.

I will now mention two pictures painted some years before. In one, of about three feet by two, he did a Madonna with the Child in her lap, and on one side St Thomas Aquinas, half-

figures of the size of life, whose skins are so fresh, their faces so natural and alive, that after almost three ages they seem just come from the painter's hand. The learned author of the *Milan Guide*, the Abate Carlo Bianconi, enumerates this among the pictures in the library of St Ambrosio. I know not what has now become of it. I certainly saw at the house of Signor Domenico Pelosi a most beautiful Titian, in capital preservation—a Virgin and Child on one side, and on the other, in the act of adoration, St Thomas Aquinas, with the sun on his breast, among the beams of which is seen by a close observer, T. V. 1539. Considering the merit of the work and its excellent preservation, I venture to call this one of the best works by Titian in Milan. The other is a *Venus blinding Cupid's eyes*. In the midst of a most beautiful country sprinkled with delightful hills, and with the view at a greater distance of high mountains, as if the artist would figure the valley of Citherea and the mountain of Buffa Vento, which is in the background; upon a bank is seated the Goddess of Beauty in the act of tying a fillet round the head of Love, while another, quite a child, leaning his arms on her left shoulder, watches with a malicious smile what the mother is doing to his elder brother.

Two handsome girls, but less handsome than Venus, hold in their hands the arms of Love to give them to him when he is blinded. The group of Venus and the two boys seems done by a single dash; and shows the free design of the artist, who spread throughout the picture such beautiful varieties of tints, all true and noble, as almost to equal the elegance of the argument and invention. This fine picture, which was in Rome in the palace Borghese, was drawn and very well engraved by Strange.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HIS WORKS IN 1544 AND 1545—GOES TO ROME IN SEPTEMBER OF THE SAME YEAR, VISITING IN HIS WAY THE DUKE OF URBINO, WHO ENTERTAINS HIM SPLENDIDLY—DOES THE PORTRAITS OF THE POPE, CARDINAL FARNESE, DUKE OTTAVIO, AND OTHER WORKS—IS VISITED IN THE PALACE BELVIDERE BY MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI—OBSERVATIONS ON THE JUDGMENT GIVEN BY THE LATTER ON THE WORKS OF TITIAN.

The Emperor had ordered the portrait of his august consort Isabella, I do not know how long before this time; but we may suppose it was not very lately, from the pressing intreaties which were conveyed to Titian through Aretin that he would finish it. For an account of this famous picture, of which none of the biographers of Titian take any notice, we are indebted, as for many other things, to Peter Aretin, who in October 1544, advised Charles to console him-

self for his lost wife, restored to the world by the pencil of Titian in so true and natural a manner, that though *God possessed one Isabella, Charles had the other.*

Allowing to the friendship and warm imagination of this singular man some expressions which must not be taken too strictly, there is no doubt but that this work was a most beautiful one; of which so good a connoisseur wrote as of a miracle to so great a prince, who had a taste for the arts and could himself design tolerably.

In the beginning of 1545, he also finished the portrait of Guidobaldo the Second Duke of Urbino, who succeeded his father as the general of the Venetian Republic, and the patron of Titian; and also that of the celebrated Daniel Barbaro, intended for Paul Giovio, who was collecting in his gallery, sacred to literature and the arts, the portraits of the most illustrious Italians. From what Aretin says respecting these works, it does not merely appear that they were beautiful, which is a praise too common for Titian's performances; but we have a new evidence that he studied not so much the giving with precision the features of the face, as to express the interior of the soul, that those who looked at the portrait might see into the mind

and disposition of the person pourtrayed, even though they did not know him.

When the famous Captain Giovanni de' Medicis died at Mantua, Aretin, wishing to preserve his likeness, had a cast taken from the face, which he ever after treasured up as one of his most valuable possessions. But at the death of Duke Alexander, Cosimo, the son of Giovanni, having succeeded to the throne of Florence, Aretin thought of gratifying the new duke, his natural lord, by sending the portrait, and the bust (done in marble) of his illustrious father. Wherefore he committed the one to Titian, the other to Sansovino; but the former having, I know not for what reason, put off the execution of it till the present year, went to Rome without finishing it; on which Aretin made friendly complaints. Perhaps he was wrong to complain, for he was always asking his friend who could deny him nothing, for portraits or anything else he took a fancy to; while poor Titian afterwards saw himself unable to satisfy the commissions of great personages, as we have seen with respect to Cardinal Hippolito, the Marquis of Guasto, and the Emperor himself. We know however that shortly after, on his return from Rome, he finished not only the portrait of Giovanni de' Medicis, but also

that of Aretin himself, who sent them all to the duke. Ridolfi also records a head of St John the Baptist on a dish, done in marble by Sansovino, which Aretin got Titian to copy on canvas. But I much doubt whether Ridolfi, not having a clear notion respecting the cast of *Signor* Giovanni, did not imagine that a head of *San* Giovanni was meant.

Though it was done probably after Titian's return from Rome, as a letter of Aretin's seems to indicate, I will give to this period, on the authority of Ridolfi, the portrait of the Duke of Alva, for whom that poet composed the sonnet beginning—

"La effigie adoranda della pace," &c.

I have hitherto introduced different pieces of poetry composed by this singular man in praise of the painter and the persons represented; and I have always noticed that very few of them rise above thankless mediocrity. Notwithstanding this, it is a remarkable thing that without these verses every memorial would be lost of many excellent works by Titian; a very humiliating observation for the proudest of the fine arts, which as it is superior to all the rest in perspicuity and perfect imitation of the objects represented, so it is inferior to all others in

sustaining the injuries of time; for sculpture and architecture are composed of the most incorruptible materials that nature produces, such as metals and marbles; and poetry, eloquence, music, are reproduced to infinity by means of writing. But this ought not in any way to discourage the professors of an art which forms the delight of noble minds, and the greatest ornament to public and private edifices; but only to let them know that they cannot aspire to immortality except on the wings of poetry and history, which alone transmit to posterity the names of the most excellent masters; and although the art of copying pictures has been discovered or revived for more than three ages, not only are these repetitions imperfect, but they have as short a life as if they were those of the most indifferent paintings.

Another proof of the immortality which poetry gives to excellent artists is to be found in the verses which Monsig. Giovanni della Casa composed for the portrait of Lady Elizabeth Quirini. I do not know whether this noble picture be still in existence; but even if it were still admired in the Royal Gallery at Florence or elsewhere, few would have the advantage of being able to see it; while every well-educated Italian knows the fine sonnet of Casa, which

will be read while any taste for poetry remains, and when, in more distant times, all the pictures of the age of Titian will be lost. The sonnet is as follows :—

" Ben vegg' io, Tiziano, in forme nuove
L'idolo mio, che i begli occhi apre e gira,
In vostre vive carte e parla e spira
Veracemente, e i dolci membri muove.
E piacemi che il cuor doppio ritrove
Il suo conforto ove talor sospira ;
E mentre che l'un volto e l'altro mira,
Brama il vero trovar, nè sa ben dove.
Ma io come potro l'interna parte
Formar già mai dì questa altera imago,
Oscuro fabbro a sì chiara opra eletto ?
Tu, Febo, (poichè amor men rende vago),
Reggi il mio stil, che tanto alto subbietto
Fra somma gloria alla tua nobil arte."

In the present year Titian received a public proof of the high consideration in which he was held by the Senate of Venice ; a solemn testimony of the liberal principles of that wise government and of the excellence of the artist. The doubtful faith of Solyman the Second, Emperor of the Turks, and the indefatigable rivalry between Charles and Francis, warned the Venetian Government, placed in the midst

of these ambitious princes, to provide for their own security. They therefore increased their armies and navies, and under the direction of the famous Michael Sammicheli, fortified at an enormous expense the ports of Venice and all the cities of Italy and the Levant. As the ordinary revenues were not sufficient to pay for this, and as they did not wish to cool the fidelity of their subjects on the *terra firma* by heavy taxes, they imposed a duty on all the inhabitants of the city of whatever rank, from which they dispensed only *Titian Vecelli, out of regard for his rare excellence:* an unexampled distinction, envied by no one; because his abilities had no longer any rivals to stand in competition with him, and it was highly applauded by his admirers.

In the August of this year, 1545, being invited by Cardinal Alexander Farnese, Titian set out from Venice on his way to Rome, at the age of sixty-eight years, after having been prevented many times by various accidents from going thither. To the solicitations of the magnificent cardinal was added the advice of Girolamo Quirini and Aretin, and the very eager desire he himself had to see the fine works of ancient and modern artists in which Rome was still so rich. He was accompanied by his son Horatio, then

about thirty years old, and already a good painter; Girolamo, called *Di Tiziano*, with some other pupils, and a considerable number of domestics. He was received at Urbino in a most friendly manner by Duke Guidobaldo the Second, for whom a little before he had done a magnificent portrait and other things, of which we shall give notice soon; and who entertained him nobly for some days at his court, treating him more like a prince than an artist. But his talents, his noble and dignified appearance, the high esteem in which he was held by the Emperor and the senate of Venice, and the noble custom of the Italian princes of that happy age to consider literary men and artists as a very principal ornament of their courts, made those honours to be considered as a just tribute to merit, which in other ages would be thought an act of the greatest condescension. Whether during his short stay at the court of Urbino, Titian did some things for the duke, is not well known; but if the so celebrated Venus of the royal gallery of Florence be, as is generally thought, the picture of a mistress of Guidobaldo, it must be supposed that on this occasion he merely did a sketch of it; and afterwards finished it at Rome or Venice, whence, as we shall see, he sent various works to that noble prince.

The duke accompanied him from Urbino as far as Pesaro, and thence had him waited upon by his servants and horses to Rome; perhaps the greatest example of the pomp of the arts since the finest times of Grecian liberty!

Nor was he less kindly received at Rome by Cardinal Farnese, who assigned him magnificent apartments in the palace Belvidere, and ordered professors of the art to keep him company and shew him all the rare things in Rome. Vasari being then in the service of the Cardinal was introduced to our artist, and accompanied him about the city. Bastiano del Piombo and other artists also went with him. After he had reposed himself somewhat, and satisfied in part his curiosity, he set about doing the full-length portrait (of the size of life) of Pope Paul the Third, in which he surpassed the expectations, though very great, that all Rome entertained of his abilities. I have already shown in the preceding chapter some of the causes which gave the portraits of Titian so much truth; but I must repeat that such wonderful effects could not be produced without excellent design, *chiaro-oscuro*, expression, and not merely by colouring, in which last article all agree that Titian was supreme, and that in it he was never equalled before or after. I have often heard,

though I have never seen it in books or MSS., that Titian and his brother Francis made a ground of vermilion in the naked parts of their figures, which ground they afterwards shaded and brightened as much as was required to obtain the proper flesh-colour. Perhaps this was an ingenious discovery of some one who wanted to explain things he knew nothing about. Besides the portrait of the Pope, he also did those of Cardinal Farnese and Duke Ottavio, although they were already painted by the side of their uncle; Ottavio, in the act of respectfully presenting himself to say something, the other in an attitude of listening to what is going to be said. The portrait of Pope Paul passed from the court of Parma to Capo di Monte in Naples, when the male race of the Farnese was extinct. The separate portrait of Cardinal Farnese is still in excellent preservation in the Corsini palace at Rome, and was engraved with great spirit by Girolamo Rossi. And though Vasari only speaks of an *Ecce Homo* done as a present for the Pope, we are assured by Ridolfi that he did for the same a Magdalen, drest in an humble garb, in profound meditation. Vasari adds that the *Ecce Homo*, though a good figure, did not seem to the Roman painters of the same excellence as his other

works, and especially his portraits: and that was perhaps from his not having seen the works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, Polidoro, and others. Admitting the fact of the inferiority of this picture, the arbitrary reason adduced by Vasari will not be the less exceptionable, as containing a hidden censure of his less chaste design, of which he accuses him more openly afterwards. I call it *arbitrary*, because it is not necessary to seek extraordinary reasons for a thing too common to all artists. He had seen, and seen with pleasure, the fine antiques and modern works in Rome, and understood their beauties and defects perhaps more thoroughly than those who blamed him: but although he esteemed the best moderns very much, he was not a man to be frightened at the sight of their works.

As he had done for the Pope the devotional work of the *Ecce Homo*, he also painted for Duke Ottavio a Danae, who, lying entirely naked on a soft couch, keeps her eyes voluptuously fixed on a cloud, in the midst of which is seen descending in a blaze of light a shower of gold. The wonderful invention of the artist is visible in this picture, who, wishing to shew the satisfaction of Danae in the embraces of Jupiter, without seeing her divine lover at her side, gave

her such a vivacity of expression as to make every one understand that the God was present. That Cupid is most beautiful, who in the act of departing, having by means of gold triumphed over the obstinate girl, is turning to look at the greatest of the Gods compelled in his intrigues to assume different forms. This noble work, which gave rise to the celebrated criticism of Michael Angelo, is still preserved at the Capo di Monte in Naples, to prove the talents of Titian to every impartial person.

In the meanwhile, Titian having come to Rome as it were in triumph, and being received there with extraordinary distinction, instead of diminishing his reputation by putting his productions in competition with the first-rate pieces of Raphael and Michael Angelo, filled even Rome, so scornful and difficult to be pleased, with wonder. Such great honours rendered him an object of jealousy to Pierino della Vaga, perhaps the best artist then at Rome, but not great enough to stand before the Imperial painter. Therefore he grew afraid; and it was in fact whispered about among the artists, that the Pope had sent for Titian to paint the Hall of Kings, of which Pierino was then doing the stucco and hoped also to have the painting: whence he was rendered so restless and disturbed, that he could

have no peace nor conceal his anxiety, insomuch that his friends could never get him to visit them; and at length tormented by these feelings of jealousy, he, after a short time, fell ill and died. I take this from Felibien, but as Vasari does not corroborate it, I am in some doubt of the extent to which his jealousy carried him. Vasari says that Pierino died in consequence of hard work at his profession, and disorders incidental to his debaucheries. His death took place in 1547.

From a letter, in which Aretin acquainted him, in April 1546, with the death of the Marquis of Guasto, it appears that Titian did not leave Rome before May, after having finished the many works he did for the Farnese family, whose kindness did not this time confine itself to barren offers; for they rewarded him magnificently, and assured him of another benefice for his son Pomponio, which promise was not however carried into effect till two years after, and that at the pressing entreaties of the Duke of Urbino, and when Titian had gone to Vienna. Ridolfi says that Paul the Third offered to nominate Pomponio Bishop of Ceneda, which was refused by his honourable father, who was acquainted with the bad habits and expensive living of his son. Besides the testimony of Car-

dinal Bembo, who in a letter to Girolamo Quirini says, "It remains for me to add that your and our Titian is here, who says that he has great obligations to you, as being the cause of his visit to Rome. He has to-day seen such fine antiques that he is overwhelmed in astonishment"—it appears from more than one letter of Aretin's, how highly Titian valued the fine things he saw at Rome, and how vexed he was at not having gone there twenty years before; to such a degree that Aretin, fearing he would continue to delay his return, entreated him to get away from the priests, now writing to him to come and finish the portrait of the new Doge, who warmly entreated it of him, and now putting him in mind of some works promised to Ludovico dall' Armi and the like. Not finding any letter of Aretin's to him after April, except one to invite him to supper, it is probable. that at the end of that month, or at farthest in May, Titian returned to Venice, taking the way of Florence, where he wished to amuse himself for a few days in looking at the rare works collected with unwonted liberality in the course of a century by the Medicis family and other illustrious citizens. Having gone to Poggio in Cajano, where Duke Cosmo was then at his country-seat, he offered to do his portrait;

about which that prince, not seeming to care much, as he did not wish to discourage the artists of his own state by seeming to hold them in small estimation, Titian hastened to return to Venice, whither family-affection, the wishes of his friends, and many works which on his departure for Rome he had left unfinished, called him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SHORT NOTICE RESPECTING THE PRIVATE LIFE, INCLINATIONS, AND HABITS OF TITIAN—PORTRAIT OF DOGE DONATO—VARIOUS PICTURES FOR GUIDOBALDO THE SECOND, DUKE OF URBINO—TWO FOR CHARLES THE FIFTH.

Titian had now attained the age of seventy without having lost any of his vigour of mind or body. The pensions assigned him by the most Serene Senate of Venice and the Emperor, and (more than these) the immense presents he had received for the many works done in the space of fifty years, had enabled him to live in a handsome style; besides that Pomponio, his elder son, was in possession of good ecclesiastical revenues, and Horatio, his other son, had already the name of a successful painter. But neither the being raised to competence of fortune, which, however, is generally attendant on the better sort of artists, nor the favour of

princes, nor the esteem of the learned, nor the celebrity of his name, nor the fortune given to his sons, nor the allurements of his friends, who had such influence over him, ever took him a single instant from the love and glory of the art; so that when it appeared reasonable that he should think of enjoying himself in the maturity of his old age in that honourable leisure which he had earned by such hard labour, we shall see him even then undertaking works of the greatest importance, and bringing them to the greatest perfection. And, when at the age of eighty he lost Aretin, and thirteen years after Giacomo Sansovino, the most delightful companions of his old age, he found no consolation for such great losses but in the love of his art, for which at ninety-nine he preserved that fond attachment which had at seven placed the pencil in his hand to trace the first lines.

I have already touched upon his family, on his free converse with his friends, on his sweet and gentle manners; but I should not make known the inclinations and habits of Titian, if after having shown his merits, and, as I may call it, his professional life, up to the age of seventy, I did not briefly describe also his private life. In this I shall perhaps be blamed

by those severe critics, who think it little applicable to the history of illustrious men to mingle with the account of their glorious public deeds that of their private actions, in which a man shows what he really is, and without which he may under the splendour of universal admiration conceal the grossest defects. But, besides that it is a pleasure to noble minds to see great men in the bosom of their family, joining in the domestic cares, and opening their hearts to tender sentiments of virtuous love and friendship, it assists wonderfully in fixing the limits of the esteem which is due to them.

It appears that he lost his parents at about the age of fifty, and when he was known for one of the greatest geniuses of Italy. After that time his visits to Cadore became less frequent, although he retained till death a lively regard for his native place, his brother, and his other relations. It is, however, necessary to observe that he lost his wife when still young: for we do not find any notice taken of her by any writer, not excepting Aretin, who never failed to record all the events, good or bad, which happened to his friend from 1530 to 1556. We learn from a letter of his, that after the loss of his wife Titian entrusted part of his domestic affairs to Orsa, his sister, who

died in the beginning of 1550, leaving Francesco and Titian much afflicted at her death; the former of whom used to spend some of the winter months at Venice with his brother. The love he bore his own sons was very great, as was the care he took that they might become great and good men: and he used to rejoice with his friends far and near at their prosperity and health, and the progress they made in their studies. And although Pomponio, answering ill his father's care, abandoned himself with Francesco Sansovino to a too free and dissolute course of life, he did not fail to make interest in his favour; and through his father's influence he obtained honourable ecclesiastical preferments. It is necessary to observe that the misdemeanours of the young friends were heavy and frequent; and that their fathers had often determined to punish them when the good offices of the compassionate Aretin were interposed, and saved them. The younger son, Horatio, was a good young man; and as he, having given himself up to painting, had made very great progress in the art, his father made him (after he had passed his twentieth year) the inseparable companion of his journeys and his labours. The last fruit of his short marriage was Cornelia, who was honourably

married to Cornelio Sarcinelli with a very large dowry; to make up which we find him imploring his Imperial Clemency for the payment of his pension. He was not less affectionate to his other relations than to his sons; and in particular towards Thomas Titus Vecelli, a highly respectable lawyer, and father of that Mark Vecelli the painter, who, on account of the singular kindness always shown him by his master Titian, never went by any other name than that of Marco di Tiziano.

He lived rather parsimoniously till he was past fifty; not so much because his gains were moderate, as to use himself to the laudable frugality of his ancestors. But from this he was easily drawn by Sansovino and Aretin, and by the customs of the courts he frequented after 1530. At that time, in addition to the large house he had at San Cangiano, he purchased another with very delightful gardens, situated at that extremity of Venice which looks towards Murano. This was in the heat of summer the most frequented promenade in the city. There, and sometimes at the houses of Aretin and Sansovino, he used to sup with the friends who composed the Academy, amusing themselves till an advanced hour of the night, in pleasing arguments and learned dis-

putes. There are many letters of Aretin relating to this subject, abounding in curious notices on the free and friendly manner of these select parties, on the guests, on the rare elegance of the entertainment, the gifts also which distant friends presented to the merit or epicureanism of the two illustrious artists, and to the dreaded pen of the terrible Aretin, only to be appeased by exaggerated praise or gifts. To the three first-mentioned were added Francesco Marcolino, a learned Venetian painter, Count Manfred Collalto, Sperone Speroni, who was frequently passing from Padua to Venice, Luigi Anichino, Pigna, the Abbate Vassallo, the agent of Duke Cosmo, Torquato Bembo, and others: and very often respectable ladies enlivened these select parties, such as Paola Sansovino, La Marcolini, Angiola Zaffetti, La Franceschini, La Violante, &c. Thus having dedicated great part of the day to his art and his family, he spent the remaining hours in the free enjoyment of friendship and pleasure, without abandoning himself to that culpable sensuality, which, in their old age, Sansovino and Aretin could not give up.

Of the above-mentioned letters of Aretin I will transcribe those only which will suffice to convey an adequate idea of the gay life and

habits of Titian, which cannot be given with more certainty than from the confidential correspondence of his dearest friend.

"TO PIGNA NICCOLO.

"As I know you are not a prince, that you should forget to observe engagements, not perhaps in the course of a day, but in the same hour you promise them, I think that you remember how, in sending me the large jar full of Ferrarese fennel, you said: 'Eat this soon with your friends, for I have more of it:' and so, behold that Titian, Sansovino, and myself, after enjoying the first, are in expectation of making merry with the second, with somewhat less anxiety than that of the Cardinals round the Pope, whose life, to throw them into despair, lengthens itself into a shadow.

"November 1541, Venice."

"TO HIS FRIEND TITIAN.

"We all expect you this evening to supper, at which will also be present Sansovino with that gentleman who talks so much."

"TO THE SAME.

"A brace of pheasants and I know not what

else expect you at supper with Signora Angiola and myself; therefore come, that old age, the spy of death, affording us continual amusement, may have nothing to tell him but that we are old. Come then, and if Anichino likes to accompany you, he shall be most welcome.

"December 1547. Venice."

"TO LA FRANCESCHINI.

"We expect you this evening to supper: Titian, Sansovino, and myself expect you; on condition, that you bring Messer Hippolito with you, that when the relish for supper fails, we may lengthen it out with the sweetness of your music.

"November 1548."

"TO MESSER JACOPO DA ROMA.

"Myself, the Florentine Secretary, the Abate Vassallo, Titian, and Luigi Anichino supped together yesterday, upon nothing else than your courteous aud perfect presents.

"January 1550. Venice."

"TO SANSOVINO.

"Titian, Anichino, and myself expect you to supper; don't fail.

"February 1550."

"TO SANSOVINO.

"I wished to conceal from you and Titian that I supped with the most beautiful Virginia; for I wished to keep your old age safe from voluptuous feelings.

"August 1550. Venice."

"TO MESSER ALESSANDRO, SCULPTOR.

"The pears you sent me from Vicenza are fine and juicy; for you are not less courteous in your gifts than powerful in marble; nor suppose but that Titian shared them with me, for it is well known that we sup almost always together as friends; and Sansovino praised them, who also lives with us, as you have often seen.

"December 1550."

"TO PIGNA.

"Most kind, most dear, and most gracious Messer Nicolo! Because it seemed to Titian, who gives life to colours, and to Sansovino, who gives breath to marble, an almost ungrateful action, my thanking you alone for the gift of the pickled fennel and spice cakes, they both with me and with the testimony of their appe-

tite, fond of such savoury food, confess to be much obliged to you for it.

"January 1551."

"TO MESSER GIOVAN JACOPO DA ROMA.

"For the fine and excellent turkey which the affable kindness of your true courtesy sent me from Padua, I give you as many thanks as he had feathers in the tail and wings; and the more indeed, that with so honourable a dish, I entertained the most lovely, the sweetest, and best lady that Cupid has in his court. La Spadara Angela fed on the bird, which if it does not precede the peacock, is so little behind it as to appear equal. The Ambassador of Mantua, Monsignor Torquato Bembo, Sansovino, and Titian entertaining the divine lady at table, enjoyed the turkey, which has three sorts of flesh in its breast. Wherefore she and they at every mouthful bestowed blessings on the giver. If you, who are an example to all accomplished persons, had been of that agreeable party, as every one present wished, the table could not have been finer. I commend myself to you.

"March 1552. Venice."

"TO THE DUKE OF FLORENCE'S AGENT.

"Titian and Sansovino not less your brothers than mine, intreat that your affable and dearly beloved Lordship would condescend to come and sup with them to-morrow evening." *

Liberal without being prodigal, respectful towards the great, open with his friends, courteous to his inferiors, servile to none, Titian knew how to make himself beloved by all. His house was frequented by all the princes, *literati*, and gentleman who came to Venice in his time; for he, to the excellence of his art, added most gentlemanly and gracious manners, and was endowed with so fine a judgment that he knew how to render himself pleasing to all. He had a fine and numerous train of servants; dressed well, and made a splendid figure at home and abroad; and in his journeys to the sovereign courts he was always accompanied by an honourable company of friends, pupils, and domestics. Though the study and love of his art did not permit him to apply regularly to literature, he yet learnt enough of it to make

* Samichelli, the famous architect, often appeased the irritable Aretin with presents of Malmsey wine, which were devoted to the same purpose.

himself courted by the greatest men in that department in his time; among whom I shall only mention Ludovico Ariosto, Casa, Bembo, Navagero, Sperone Speroni, Bernardo Tasso, Pierio Valeriano, Ludovico Dolce, Priscianese, Robertello, Daniel Barbaro, Andrea Vesalio, Monsignor Valerio, Paolo Jovio, Cornelio Frangipane, Fracostorio, Pigna, Cinzio Giraldi; and not to mention any others, Aretin, who was his inseparable companion to his eightieth year, and Giovan Maria Verdizzotti, who formed the consolation of his extreme old age and was partly the heir of his virtues.

He had, before undertaking the journey to Rome, begun the portrait of Francesco Donato, then procurator of St Mark's, who, during our artist's long stay at the papal court, was elected Doge in the place of Pietro Lando, who died in November 1545. Of this Aretin gave him notice; and desired him, also in the name of the Doge himself, to hasten back to finish a work which seemed to have been left imperfect by a divine interposition, that the ducal regalia might be added to it.

Having finished the portrait of Donato, he began many works which had been ordered by the Duke of Urbino; in which he wished to show what he could do, exerting himself to the

utmost to serve so magnificent and noble a lord. He now required him to do a naked Venus lying on a soft couch, covered with the whitest linen, in a chamber lighted by full day. She holds in her right-hand a garland of flowers; and her left falls over that part which female modesty is wont to conceal. The sparkling of her eyes, fixed on no determined object, shows the greatest voluptuousness; and the free action of her arms and the composed attitude of her other limbs are suitable to one, who having her thoughts employed on delightful images, enjoys the quietest calm.

A beautiful dog with a long coat of white, spotted with black, lies couched at her feet; and two women, rather less than they ought to be at so short a distance, are bringing from a chest the clothes which are to hide so much beauty from profane eyes. It is really a wonderful thing to see this figure all in full day, with a clear back-ground of such marvellous effect, without any apparent artifice of shade to break the large masses of light which proceed from the most delicate skin which can be seen and the perfect whiteness of the linen. I will say nothing of the design of this beautiful figure; for as the noble painter used to say, it is not colour that makes fine figures but good design. In fine,

this new Venus, which, when the noble family of Rovera was extinct, became the property of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, was thought worthy to be put by the side of that most famous Greek Venus in the Royal Gallery. Some affirm, but with little foundation, that not this, but the other woman in the same gallery, placed nearly in the same attitude, except that she has a most beautifnl Cupid caressing her, is the one which Titian did for Guidobaldo the Second, and that the one just described belonged to Don Antonio de' Medici, Duke of Capistrano. But Ridolfi and Vasari are both of my opinion. This last Venus is less delicate, and though equally beautiful in a robust way, has deeper tints, and the shades are more obscure. The silk on which she lies, has a red flowered ground; a colour which agrees wonderfully with the general tone and conduct of the picture. The former Venus is of the size of life; the other somewhat less, which impairs the illusion. The former seems to be between fifteen and sixteen, the most beautiful age of women, an age always suited to a goddess, to the goddess of beauty: the second has all the appearance of being some mistress perhaps of Guidobaldo, for whom we know that Titian did more than one picture of a beautiful

woman, and is of a more mature age than the other. An engraving of the first Venus by Strange in 1768, preserves in some measure the marvellous effect of the original. It was also engraved by Van Cruys.

Titian, to the profane beauties he sent to Guidobaldo, added the picture of another woman perhaps not less beautiful, but placed in that modest and pious attitude which becomes a penitent. Of this picture, which was as it were the first specimen of those inimitable Magdalens which he afterwards did, I shall speak with more propriety when I describe the others. He also sent the Duke two very beautiful half-figures of women, which were probably some of those which Titian used to do when he happened to be able to pourtray the likeness of some beautiful model. And of these he always had a number in his house, perhaps for the purpose of forming from the finest among them his Venuses, &c. Vasari assures us that in the wardrobe of the Duke Urbino there were in his time, by the hand of Titian, the portraits of Charles the Fifth; King Francis, when a young man; Pope Sixtus the Fifth; Julius the Second, and Paul the Third; of the old Cardinal of Lorraine, and of Solyman, Emperor of the Turks. To these must be added those I have already

noticed of Guidobaldo the Second, and his father, Francesco Maria.

At the latter end of 1547, Charles having gone to Vienna for the purpose of being at hand to render the endeavours of the enemy abortive, he sent for Titian; who not wishing to present himself before the Emperor without offering him some new production of his genius, finished two pictures of an entirely different nature, to satisfy at once both the religious and worldly feelings of the august monarch. In the one he represented a Christ scourged and crowned with thorns, shewn to the people to be mocked; of this picture, previous to his departure, he presented a duplicate or copy to his friend Aretin; in the other he figured a Venus of such rare beauty, that as the first moved every one who looked at it to repentance, so the other awoke youthful feelings even in the hearts of the old. It seemed strange to our artist to be forced at his advanced age and in the midst of winter to expose himself to a long and dangerous journey; so that he could hardly make up his mind to set out. But all his doubts were removed by his faithful counsellor Aretin, to whom it was important to have near Charles one who was as a brother to him. He encouraged him warmly to comply with the invitations of the Emperor,

magnifying equally the generosity of so great a prince, who in the midst of the threatenings and troubles of war bethought himself of his favourite painter, and the abilities of him who merited such distinction.

In the meantime, the report being spread of the invitation of Titian to the Imperial court, and every one knowing how much Charles desired to have him in his household, it was commonly thought that in his mature old age of seventy he would have preferred the ease and honours of the court to the laborious exercise of his art. Wherefore all who through love of the art or vanity wished to have some work of so great a master, hastened to obtain, at very high prices, all the pictures they could from among those he had in his house. Of these, though there were an immense number, not only is it impossible to know at what time they were done; but many of them having been often transferred from one family to another, and not seldom sent out of Italy, and others entirely destroyed by time or lost, it is quite as impossible to say what the subjects were. On the great desire for his pictures evinced at his departure, Aretin in one of his letters remarks—"It was the most flattering testimony to his excellence to see, as soon as it was known that the divine painter was sent

for, the crowds of people running to share in the productions of his art, and how they endeavoured to purchase the pictures, great and small, and every thing that was in the house at any price; for every body is sure that his august Majesty will so treat his Apelles, that he will no longer condescend to exercise his pencil, except to oblige him." It was this circumstance, with the dispersion of his pictures which took place after his death and that of Horatio his son, that probably enriched the galleries of Paolo Serra, of the Grimani and Servi, of the Barbarigo, &c. which at one time (and some of them to this hour) could boast a copious catalogue of Titian's works; among which it is not unlikely that many came from his study not quite finished, and that others are only copies by his pupils.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AT THE SUMMONS OF CHARLES THE FIFTH TITIAN GOES TO VIENNA, WHERE HE IS HONOURED BY THE CONFIDENCE OF THAT MONARCH—RETURNS TO VENICE IN THE SUMMER OF 1548—HIS WORKS UP TO SEPTEMBER 1550.

At the end of January or the beginning of February 1548, Titian set out on the road to Vienna, whither he was summoned by the Emperor, taking with him Thomas Titus Vecelli, a respected lawyer and his near relation, John Vecelli his nephew, and Horatio his son, accompanied by a numerous suite of pupils and servants. The singular demonstrations of affection shewn him by so great a prince made him forget the roughness of the roads and the season; and he found the good effects of his compliance with the orders he had received, as he informed his friend Aretin. But as during his

progress Titian was sparing of his letters, his impatient friend already suspected that the favours of Charles had cooled in him that fraternal affection which had united their minds for more than twenty years; an unjust suspicion, for on the contrary, Titian had warmly exerted himself in his favour with the Emperor, and had obtained for him a dowry for Austria his younger daughter; which imparted extreme pleasure to her good father, *as one who tenderly loved his offspring*. Of this joyful news he gave notice to Aretin by means of John Vecelli, who returned home soon after his arrival at Vienna. Nor were the good offices of Titian limited to this; for profiting by his great influence at court, he also obtained for his friend through Charles's liberality a considerable sum of money; and promoted his interests with the Prince of Salerno, who was then with Charles, and from whom Aretin hoped to obtain the reward of his ancient services.

Of the great demonstrations of esteem which Titian received at court, and of his being admitted freely and with a partial regard to the conversation of Charles, Aretin gave due notice to his and Titian's friends, to *please these and to put in despair those who do not less grieve at Titian's riches than they rejoice at my poverty*.

Vasari, Ridolfi, and the anonymous life published by Tizianello, and all other biographies of Titian after them, mention only one journey to Vienna, supposing that he stayed in Germany till the end of 1550, sometimes at the court of Charles and sometimes at that of the King of the Romans, his brother; wherefore I cannot possibly distinguish between the works he executed there on the first visit and those of the second. There is no doubt, however, of his not having, in the first journey, pourtrayed the august Monarch, and of his not having begun the devotional work he sent him afterwards, and which was brought to perfection in the next year. Meantime, allow me to record as works of the present year the pictures done for the celebrated family Függer, the rival of the Medicis as well in riches as in its splendid patronage of learned men and artists: for these works our painter received the noble reward of three thousand crowns. He also did for the family of the merchants Peronnei an excellent picture; and another for the Cardinal of Vienna, representing the principal ages of man, in which are seen some beautiful children asleep on the ground in each other's arms; then a shepherd near his mistress; and lastly, in a most pleasant country, near a tomb, is an old man,

whose back is bent and whose head is bald from old age: a fine work, which a century after was purchased by Christina, Queen of Sweden, for a thousand sequins.

It appears that in June 1548, he left Vienna for his own country, the Emperor himself having also gone, after publishing in May the famous *Interim;* since from May we have no more letters from Titian to Aretin, who had sent him so many in the three preceding months. A short time after his arrival at Venice, the noble artist had received a flattering testimony of the love of the august Charles: for the report of his death being spread abroad throughout Italy, the generous prince gave signs of the deepest affliction; and when he found the unlucky news was void of foundation, he himself testified his joy to our artist. The latter, penetrated with gratitude at so much goodness, protested to the generous Monarch that life was doubly dear to him; which he wished to preserve at least till he had finished the work ordered by his Majesty. This was the picture of the *Madonna in Tears,* which was probably entrusted to him at the end of 1548, or at farthest the end of the next year, as we learn from the letter he wrote to the Emperor.

If Titian had reason to be satisfied with the

love and generosity of so great a Prince, he had, on the other hand, just cause to complain of his Ministers in Italy, who contrived to frustrate the beneficence of their august master. In the letter referred to, he intreats his Majesty " to hasten the payment of his pension of two hundred crowns on the exchequer of Milan, that of three hundred loads of wheat on the kingdom of Naples, and that of five hundred crowns on the customs of Spain for his son Horatio."

It appears strange, that Titian in the open favour of Charles should find such difficulty in obtaining the payment of his pensions from the administrators of the royal revenues. But on this point I must quote the very sensible observation of the historian Guicciardini, that though Charles had vast dominions, and these entirely separated from Spain, which were the basis and principal nerve of his power, he was forced to give them up to the discretion of vice-roys, to whom, that they might not contrive any thing against the state, he granted an entire and vexatious controul over his subjects.

Titian always experienced much trouble in obtaining his pensions; and as I do not wish to touch upon this question hereafter, I will here set down all that has to do with the subject.

From various documents, some of them unprinted, it appears that it was after the utmost difficulty and delay, and repeated petitions, that he ever obtained his pensions through the culpable negligence of the royal ministers. In a collection of manuscript Spanish and Italian letters, which Liruti saw at the Abbate Sabbionato's, there was one dated 1537, in which Count Peres tells Titian that Davila had written in his favour to Cardinal Carracciolo. To the same Davila Titian wrote in the same year for his interest to obtain for him the pension due to him from the exchequer of Milan, but without effect. He spoke of it in Vienna, in 1548, to the Emperor, asking his interposition with the royal exchequer; on which representation Charles desired the Governor, Ferdinand Gonzaga, to compel the immediate execution of his orders, without allowing any cavillings *nor any other frivolous exceptions.* But even this was not attended to, as appears from a subsequent letter of Titian to Charles the Fifth.

Nor did things proceed more smoothly under Philip II. In 1557 Titian was a creditor to the amount of two thousand crowns for pensions and works done for Charles; for which Philip wrote to his principal agent in Italy, Silvestro Cataneo, that *out of the money col-*

lected for the royal exchequer, two thousand crowns in gold should be paid to Titian. But notwithstanding this absolute order, we learn from a letter of Cajas to Titian in 1561, that his claim was not yet satisfied; and when he wrote an earnest petition to Agostino Doria, to make use of his influence with the ambassador Figueros, he learnt that to excuse their paying him, they pretended some doubtful expression in the King's letter, and the want of the signature of the ministers. Wearied with these strange proceedings, he intreated the Monarch, in 1564, to put an end to his troubles. If the intreaties of our artist had some good effect, it was not a full one: it is even rather probable that he died before any thing was done by Philip, who only in the year 1575 ordered the painter Sanchez to make a list of all the pictures which were in the court by the hand of Titian; but Titian died the next year.

What works he did in Italy, on his return to Vienna, up to his second visit, except the Madonna in tears, which we have mentioned, is not well known; but it is certain that to this period belongs the fine portrait of Monsignor Beccadelli, the legate from the Holy See to the Venetian Senate, who, at the death of Pope Paul III. succeeded Giovanni della Casa in that

post. Both Titian and Aretin wished thus to gratify this noble prelate for having assisted the curate of the Minor Friars, their confessor, who had been put in prison for having spoken indiscreetly about confession, saying that it was not of divine origin. He also did, in the beginning of 1550, the portrait of a certain Father Feliciano, a famous preacher, a friend of his and Aretin's, who having come to preach during the Lent of that year, had Titian frequently as an auditor. And it is probable, though no authentic document has been found to the purpose, that at this time he also did the portrait of the mistress of Bernardo Tasso, who had requested it of him in a sonnet beginning—

" Ben potete con l'ombre e coi colori :"

probably calling to his mind their acquaintance at Vienna, whence he had set out for Italy a few days after Titian's arrival, being sent on a mission by the Prince of Salerno, his patron.

At the latter end of 1548, Giacomo Sansovino had rebuilt, after the disaster that had happened to it, at his own expence, the arch of the library of St Mark, and divided it with stucco into different compartments: for which the procurators wishing that there should be pictures by the best masters, entrusted Titian with the

choice of them; and as they intended to give a greater reward to him who should surpass the rest, they appointed Titian and Sansovino to be the judges. In this election, whether it were (as some suspected) the effect of old dislike or otherwise, it happened that Tintoret was left out; and the whole entrusted to Giuseppe Salviati, Paul Veronese, Battista Zelotti, Zuanne da Mio, Giulio Lizzini, and Andrea Schiavone. Whereupon Tintoret, thinking himself injured, contrived, probably by having found means to render Aretin his friend, to obtain also a share in it. Although he gained his end, it is necessary to say that he did not cease to blame Titian; of which the latter having intelligence, he complained bitterly to his friends of Aretin, as if he had been the cause of this scandal, by having endeavoured to favour Tintoret. And it must be allowed that the thing went to greater lengths than became their friendship; for Titian repenting of what had come from his mouth in the first burst of his passion, let his friend know that he was sorry for it, and ready to ask his pardon; which Aretin handsomely declined, saying, that "Titian, being his other self, he ought not to ask himself pardon." But to return to Tintoret: he did the figure of the philosopher Diogenes, which, according to

Ridolfi, was a stupendous production; however, that of Paul Veronese was judged to be better than this and all the other works. Perhaps through fear of differing in making their choice, the two judges, to avoid any suspicion of partiality, heard the opinions of their coadjutors, as to which (after their own) was the best painting; and all agreeing in favour of Paul Veronese, confirmed their judgment.

In March 1550, death deprived Titian of his sister Orsa, at which he was most deeply grieved; as she was a most valuable person, to whom, compensating in part for the loss of his wife and for the chagrin which the bad conduct of his son Pomponio caused him, he had committed the care of his family.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN OCTOBER 1550 TITIAN RETURNS TO THE COURT OF THE EMPEROR—DOES MANY WORKS THERE, AND IS LIBERALLY REWARDED FOR THEM—USES HIS INTEREST WITH CHARLES THE FIFTH TO GET ARETIN NOMINATED A CARDINAL—ON HIS RETURN STOPS AT THE COURT OF THE KING OF THE ROMANS AT INSPRUCK, AND THERE DOES SOME WORKS.

In the summer of 1550 Charles returned from Flanders to Vienna; when (I do not know whether upon a fresh summons, or whether he had promised it before he obtained permission to return home) Titian, as soon as he heard of it, prepared to set out to the Imperial court. From the letters which Aretin wrote him in August and September this year, we learn that he did not set out from Venice till October; in which month it is likely he arrived in Vienna, as he wrote on the 4th and 11th of November to his friend Aretin. From the last letter we find indeed that he carried some pictures to the

Emperor, but not their subject. It is not, however, improbable, that about this time, or a little before, he drew Charles V. in the act of haranguing his army; as it is known that to the present day there is preserved, in the new royal palace at Madrid, a picture of Charles addressing his soldiers, and another almost the same in the Barefoot Carmelites in that capital; both by the hand of Titian, and probably upon the principle of that of the Marquis of Guasto. Ridolfi says that this time Charles was drawn as an elderly man; and Vasari gives us to understand nearly the same thing. And it was indeed true: for although Charles, when in 1550 he came to Vienna, was but a few months past fifty, he had already lost much of the vigour both of his mind and body. Prince Philip was also at Vienna, whither he had come at the summons of his father; he was then not more than twenty-three years old, and Titian drew him at full length so admirably, that it is impossible to see any thing finer. He stands upright on his feet; his head covered and his hair cut short, so as to show his large face, more adapted for grave dignity than for joy. A slight streak of short beard straggles from the upper extremity of one cheek to the other, and joins the hair under the ears. A tuft of hair rises

between the chin and the lower lip; and two somewhat larger ones, distinct from each other, and not reaching further than the corners of the mouth, cover the upper lip. A short doublet with ornamented sleeves is confined to the waist by the large belt which sustains the sword. The short furred cloak which he wears does not reach farther than the middle of the thighs, and shows the dress under it. He holds in the right hand a pair of gloves, his left resting on the hilt of his sword. Besides this separate portrait, he was also represented in a large picture in the act of offering the boy Carlos to Fame, who is descending from on high, bringing him a leaf of palm and a wreath;—unfortunate boy, who instead of reviving the glory of his noble grandfather, whose name he bore, and whose talents he promised to have, died in prison, a victim to the jealous hypocrisy of his suspicious father! On it is to be read the motto: *Majora tibi;* and farther down, *Titianus Vecellius Eques Cæsareus fecit.*

Duke Cosmo, who had not seemed to care about having his portrait taken when Titian went to pay his respects to him in 1546, now desired duplicates of the pictures of Charles and Philip; and Titian gratified him with one of each. More than one portrait of these two

princes is to be seen in the new royal palace of Madrid, resembling that at the royal gallery at Florence.

As he was painting a large frieze to ornament a chamber, containing (two-thirds less than life) all the illustrious personages of the house of Austria, Charles desired the artist to introduce his own portrait, which he did, placing himself in the least honourable place, and so as to be easily known to be of an inferior rank to the rest.

The Duke of Saxony was at this time a prisoner of the Emperor's, being the head and principal support of the Protestant party; and he had many times put the Emperor himself to great trouble. The latter admiring him, though an enemy, made Titian take his portrait, that he might have with him the image of his (next to Francis the First of France) most dangerous opponent: over whom he had after a long time triumphed less by military than by political skill.

The great political and religious changes had assembled at the Imperial court many princes and the ministers of all the powers of Europe, who were astonished at seeing our artist so high in the confidence of Charles, and that he always had free access to him, which was only granted

to his dearest friends; so that not only the most elevated but also the most influential courtiers regarded him with an eye of jealous envy. But Titian, who perfectly understood the ways of a court and how dangerous it was to expose himself to the intricacies of court-intrigue, by seeming not to be sensible of Charles's partiality, by gratifying the principal lords by presents of pictures, and dexterously avoiding all political affairs, contrived to merit universal esteem and to lull envy asleep. Seeing himself in the good graces of Charles, Titian did not forget Aretin, who on his departure from Venice had given him a letter for the Emperor; nor to promote with his Majesty and the principal personages of the court Aretin's elevation to the Cardinalship, of which very great hopes had been given the latter by the pontifical courtiers. The letter which our artist wrote from Vienna (dated the 11th of November) to his friend, contains a circumstantial account of what he had done with Charles and his ministers; and that he had found the minds of all so favourably disposed, that he concluded with saying—"*And now be merry, for by the grace of God you will have reason to be so.*"

When Titian was first sent for to Vienna, it was thought (and not only by those who did

not know him intimately, but by Aretin himself, as we have seen, and by all the friends of Vecelli) that Charles would have retained him about his person; and this opinion gained ground at his second visit. But it is proper to say, that the excellent old man grew disgusted at the deceitful ways of the courtiers and at the servile life of a court, although apparently so happy a one. Besides the allurements of the agreeable quiet life he led in Venice, his love for his country and family, and his having retained in the maturity of his old age rather an inclination to pleasure than a desire for riches and honours, dissuaded him from remaining at the court, where the friendship (not always sincere of the grandees) did not compensate for that of his old and true friends in Italy. The frequent attacks of gout which came upon the Emperor facilitated his obtaining the royal consent to his departure; for his Majesty feeling himself day by day becoming more incapable of sustaining the great weight of empire, and the laborious and anxious life he had led for more than thirty years, began to encourage in his heart the thought of recovering from so many fatigues in the tranquillity of solitude. This design he imparted to Titian, with whom he was continually planning that large picture of

the Celestial Glory, which was to be (as a consolation for his departure from the world) his inseparable companion till death. Disgusted with the insurmountable obstacles which Ferdinand, King of the Romans, and the German Diet opposed to his favourite project of uniting on the head of his son Philip the crown of Spain and the Imperial laurel; after he had settled as well as he could the religious quarrels of Germany, he set out at the latter end of 1551, accompanied by our artist, on the road to Inspruck, in order to be nearer Trent, where the council was re-assembled.

Here Titian began two great works; the Trinity or the Celestial Glory for the Emperor, and the portraits of all the numerous family of Ferdinand. Of this he composed a large history, giving to King Ferdinand and Queen Anna Maria, whom he placed on the most elevated part, the attributes of Jupiter and Juno, round whom are circled in different attitudes, seven royal princesses their daughters. It is said that he received the present of a jewel from each of these illustrious ladies every time they sat to him, beside the considerable gift he had from the king of three hundred crowns, and the grant of the free exportation of timber from the Tyrol in favour of his brother Francis, without the

payment of any duties. He also did separately the portrait of Archduke Maximilian, who was emperor after Ferdinand, who was not behind the others in rewarding the Imperial painter.

For the other picture of the Trinity, he there collected the portraits of the royal family, reserving it as a work of the greatest importance to be finished at Venice. Vasari wrote on this picture at some length; but as I have not seen the original nor the print engraved by Cornelio Cort, under the direction of Titian himself, I cannot give an exact description of it. In the most elevated part of the picture he painted in the midst of a bright glory the Trinity, represented under the usual form, enriched by a numerous attendance of Cherubims. On the right hand and almost at the same elevation, he introduced the Virgin Mary, behind whom come the greatest heroes of ancient and modern history, all of different faces, ages, attitudes, and dress, which the artist could not have done so well on the left hand where he placed Charles himself, Philip his son, and other members of the royal family of Austria, all drest in white, and all in that devout, pious attitude, which becomes those who, raised from this base earth, find themselves in a single moment welcomed by Angels into the regions of the blest, in the

presence of the Deity. In the figure of a most beautiful young woman, richly habited, the noble artist represented the church in the act of presenting the new citizens of Heaven to God. The effect of the light is most beautiful, which, proceeding from the supreme glory of the Trinity, illumines the surface of the grey clouds which form the back-ground of the picture; and more wonderful still is the management of the reflections on the figures assembled beneath, separating them entirely from the sky. In this stupendous work it appears that Titian, identifying himself with his subject, endeavoured to express by more sublime imagery and with all the wonders he could achieve in his art, that which eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor the human mind conceived. The beauty of the forms, the harmony of the colours, the excellent disposition of all the parts, and that diffusion of vivid light, which proceeding from the Divinity invests all the objects within its reach, and in different degrees *penetrates into and shines in one part more and another part less*, touch you, move you, and compel you as it were to abandon your mind to the grand, the awful ideas which the gospel gives us of the intellectual, the inexpressible delights of the blessed.

Is this the apotheosis of Charles and his family? Or is it only an animated book which the painter opened to him, to nourish his piety and confirm his resolution of leaving the world to finish his days in a voluntary retirement? The annotator on the "Vago Italiano" adheres to the former opinion, to give him a pretext for accusing the painter of base adulation, the hero of vanity; on the other hand, the author of "Viaggio ode porico della Spagna," taxes the above writer with inaccuracy, observing that the Emperor and his family are introduced not as the blessed but as suppliants. This is a useless dispute. If it be the apotheosis of Charles, it is what a great man who dies penitent may hope for. I grant that it is premature; but to a hero who had the courage and unusual devotion to sustain the sight of the representation of his funeral obsequies, one can well grant the pleasure of seeing himself in a picture in the condition which his faith might lead him to hope for after his death. Nor ought the painter to incur any blame, who instead of exhibiting an apotheosis, such as was granted to the Roman Emperors, and which the glorious deeds of Charles deserved, quitted the proscribed doctrine of heathenism, although it presents to the fancy of the painter more poetical and varied forms, and

confined himself entirely to the dogmas of the Catholic faith. The action passes in heaven with the ministry of the Angels, before the Deity, in presence of the blessed of the Old and New Testament, who are habited in white, the symbol of sanctified humanity.

This noble work, we find by a letter from Aretin to Charles the Fifth, was not finished till 1555, in which year Titian dispatched it to the Spanish court, with another picture on a profane argument, which, when exposed to public view in the painter's house, brought all Venice to admire it.

The Emperor, who had come to Inspruck in order to be nearer the Council, which with much difficulty on the part of the court of Rome and the Protestants was re-assembled at Trent, was now to pass into Flanders to devote himself to the war about to burst on France. Titian profited by this to return to Venice, where his family, his friends, his desire of a more secluded and tranquil life called him—to leave it no more! We learn from a letter of Aretin's that in December 1551, Titian had been some time in Venice; and Ridolfi affirms that he had brought from Germany considerable riches.

Ridolfi says that on his way through Trent he visited its cardinal, and drew his portrait;

but he probably confounds dates, since we have seen that he drew it many years before. It is also certain that, besides the works ordered of him by the Emperor, he had also to satisfy the wishes of Philip, then prince of Spain, who had charged him with many works both sacred and profane; and whom Titian did not wish in any manner to neglect, hoping, as shortly after happened, to have in him a Mæcenas, not less generous than his father; who he knew was much disposed to give up to his son the reins of government, as soon as he should succeed in obtaining a lasting and honourable peace with France.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ON HIS RETURN TO VENICE TITIAN PROPOSES TO THE DOGE TO FINISH THE WORKS WHICH WERE WANTING IN THE HALL OF THE GRAND COUNCIL-CHAMBER—PICTURES FOR SERRAVALLE, BREGANZOI, MILAN, AND BRESCIA—IN 1553 HE IS CREATED COUNT PALATINE AND KNIGHT OF THE GOLDEN SPUR—WORKS ON DIFFERENT SUBJECTS FOR PHILIP THE SECOND—PORTRAITS OF THE DOGES TREVISANI AND VENIERI.

The return of Titian to Venice must have been regarded by the young professors, who were then in great numbers in that splendid capital, as the most striking triumph of the art. Too great to be offended at the snarlings of envy, too occupied by the works of Charles and Philip to think, in his advanced old age, however robust it might be, of undertaking other works of much importance; he contented himself with offering his natural prince his assistance and advice, in completing the histories

which were wanting in the hall of the Grand Council-Chamber, where for more than seventy years the greatest Venetian artists had left illustrious memorials of their skill. This he proposed in full assembly, after having given an account of the things he had done in Germany, and of the singular favours he had received from the Emperor and the King of the Romans. The offers of the excellent artist were received by the Serene Senate with thankfulness; and to him they entrusted the care of choosing those painters he thought most capable of executing works of so great consequence and in so conspicuous a place.

These were Giacomo Robusti, called Tintoret, Paul Veronese, and Horatio, Titian's son, who, as will be seen more particularly in the notice of his life, showed himself worthy of working in competition with such powerful rivals. In this choice the temperate conduct of Titian is particularly commendable, who was able to forget his differences with Tintoret, and sacrifice his private passions to the glory of Venice and the art; and the uncommon modesty of Veronese and Tintoret is also worthy of praise, who, although they had already a name among the greatest masters, did not disdain to be guided by his directions.

Having arranged in the best way possible the affairs of France, Charles the Fifth hastened to return into Spain, where, from the mildness of the climate and repose he hoped some relief from his increasing infirmities: and being in 1553 at Barcelona, he, by a very ample charter, nominated Titian a Count Palatine with all the privileges, authority, and powers attached to such a dignity; he also created him a Knight of the Golden Spur, and a Noble of the Empire; transmitting the same to his legitimate children, and descendants.* Among the motives which determined the Imperial clemency to shower such honours on his painter's head were the examples of Alexander the Great, who would be drawn by Apelles alone, loading him with honours

* The charter is at length in Ridolfi. Part of it is as follows: "Te prænominatum Titianum sacri lateranensis palatii aulæque nostræ, et imperialis consistorii nobilem fecimus, creavimus, et comitatus palatini titulo clementer insignivimus, statuentes quod ex nunc in antea in omnibus et singulis privilegiis, gratiis, juribus, &c. frui et gaudere possis. . . Te prænominatum Titianum, ac filios tuos legitimos utriusque sexus natos et nascituros, eorumque hæredes et descendentes in perpetuum, nostros et sacri Romani imperii viros nobiles creavimus, fecimus, creximus, ordinavimus, et instituimus, nobilitatisque nomine titulo, gradu, dignitate, et fascibus clementer insignivimus. . . Te Titianum Vecellensem uberiori gratia a nobis ornatum sentias nostro Cæsareo edicto, et auctoritate Cæsarea te militem, sive equitem auratum, fecimus creavimus," &c.

and wealth, and of Augustus, who practised the same generosity towards the few excellent artists whom he permitted to pourtray him. Although Titian had by his own merits rendered his name immortal, and ennobled his family and country, he was justly sensible of this public testimony of the high esteem in which he was held by so great a monarch. He did not, however, imagine that his new dignity, which placed him on a level with the favourite lords of the empire, could be injured by the exercise of that art which had rendered him deserving of it: on the contrary, he applied himself to it with so much ardour that he appeared to have reserved the greatest miracles of his genius till his old age, a time when others would have given themselves up to an honourable repose; nor was this exercised exclusively for the service of Charles and his son Philip, as he told them he wished, but also for other persons and his friends, to whom at the latter end of his life he showed himself very liberal of his works. Among his fine productions at this period, the pictures he did for the principal church of Serravalle, and that of the village of Breganzoi in the territory of Ceneda, merit a distinct notice. In the first he represented at the upper part of the picture a Glory of our Lady,

seated on light clouds with the divine Infant in her arms; and round her, in varied attitudes, are scattered groups of beautiful Angels. The figures of the Virgin and the Angels show with what attention he had studied the Grecian sculpture he so much admired at Rome: he has with admirable circumspection varied the ages of the Angels, so that you can distinctly see the tender skin of childhood, and the muscular forms of youth. The grand and severe-looking forms of the Apostles, Peter and Andrew, standing on the side of the lower part of the picture, are a very natural contrast to the delicate beauty of the Glory. The figure of St Peter presenting the keys of heaven to the Virgin is full of dignity; but the momentary attitude of St Andrew embracing with transport the instrument of his punishment is wonderful. The somewhat dark tone of the skin and dress of the Apostles helps to give them a natural relief, making them seem almost separate from the rest of the picture. At a distance are two boats, in one of which are seen some fishermen dragging their nets ashore; and in the other, in danger of sinking, are two persons, who extend in this extremity their suppliant hands to the Divine Redeemer; an episode judiciously introduced to indicate their

profession, and one of the most interesting events, their call to the Apostleship. The picture for Breganzoi was divided into three niches; in the centre one our artist painted the Virgin Mary, and in the others, St Peter and St Paul; very fine figures, boldly drawn, and of such admirable and fresh colouring that at this day they seem done only a short time since.

I will add to these two fine pictures a notice of some other excellent works destroyed by fire or military licentiousness. These, first, were three pictures of fourteen feet every way, done for the palace of the Commune of Brescia; in one of these he represented that city under the form of a youthful Amazon, clad in a helmet and cuirass, and armed with a short spear in her right hand; to whom, as their sovereign, the lakes and rivers of the province are bringing tribute. In the next, is seen Ceres, of a fine robust make and matured youth, loaded with sheaves of ripe corn, indicating the fertility of the country; near Ceres stands the divine Pallas, the ancient Protectress of that city, friendly to liberal studies, and fruitful in warlike men. In the third, he painted the ample forge of Vulcan, within which are seen the Cyclops busied in making arms of

every sort, with which Brescia was wont to furnish the arsenal of the Republic. It was said that Lactantio Gambara, a spirited Brescian artist, but not powerful enough to compete with Titian, who had filled all Europe with his works and name, requested leave to do these pictures in conjunction with our artist. For these fine paintings, the brothers, Stephano and Christofero Rosa, Brescian architects and friends of Titian, executed certain beautiful ornaments of leaves and flowers and other fancies, which were afterwards destroyed along with the pictures in the fatal conflagration of the public palace. Another of the works alluded to was the famous picture of the Crowning with Thorns, which Titian did for the church *Delle Grazie* at Milan, in which he wished to show the excellent disciples of Leonardo, who were then in high reputation, what he could do, since he was thus to come as it were into competition with the best works their master ever did. I shall say nothing of the excellence of this picture, which has been always considered one of the best works in Milan, whether for the truth of colouring, the correctness of design, or for the skill and beauty of the composition, in which learned part of painting no one had shown more mastery than the great Leonardo.

Wherefore, as our artist wished to indicate the period of the action represented, he placed in a niche of the hall, with wonderful propriety, a bust of the Emperor Tiberius. Jesus, clothed out of mockery in purple, and seated on a low stool, is in the act of being barbarously tormented by the cruel executioners: whence we almost see the wounds of the thorns, which they are binding on his forehead by force, the livid colour of his delicate skin, and over his mild face is spread the death-like paleness of the convulsions he is suffering under. The attitudes of the executioners are prompt, resolute, and varied; and their fierce countenances, the dark colour of the skin, and their gigantic forms increase in us that natural sentiment of commiseration that we feel for the weak oppressed by unjust violence. And to show that these barbarians added mockery to torment, the artist very judiciously introduced that man clothed in mail, who kneeling before Jesus, offers to him with affected respect a reed for a sceptre.

The picture of St Sebastian, a fine young man, his hands tied behind, and pierced with two arrows, who is suffering with heroic firmness the anguish of approaching death, was considered to be nearly as good as the

noble works done for the august Charles. As this picture differs but little from the one of the same subject already described, it is unnecessary to say any thing farther respecting it. The accessories are, however, entirely different, the artist having introduced a magnificent edifice, in which are seen statues of heathen deities and a bust of the Emperor, near whom is bound the Holy Martyr.

But the most famous work, and certainly the richest in invention, figures, and artifice, that he had done for Charles the Fifth, was the picture of *Religion*. In a spacious country, with a distant view of the sea, the skilful artist represented the Catholic Religion, under the form of a naked but beautiful and modest young woman; who kneeling on a stone, clasps with both hands a flourishing green tree, standing on the margin of a limpid fountain. She casts a frightened look on various serpents that, crawling from under the root of an old tree rent in the middle, are about to rush upon her. On the ground are seen scattered about and broken in pieces, crosses, chalices, mitres, and sacred emblems of every sort: the country is desolate, the sky thick, and loaded with dense clouds. A noble matron of striking beauty, her breast and head covered with glittering

armour, advances with a bold movement in defence of the forlorn Virgin. In her right hand she has a lance with a short red banner; and in the other a shield, emblazoned with the arms of Spain. Justice follows her with a drawn sword; behind whom are various armed persons of different countenances and dress. Drawn by two sea-horses, a ship advances, cutting the boisterous waves and carrying the Ottoman flag, followed at some distance by others. The management of the lights and shades in this picture, the variety of objects, the aspect of the country than which nothing can be more natural, the motion of the waves and clouds, and the melancholy tone which pervades the whole, are all wonderful. This picture is still preserved in the Escurial as one of Titian's best productions.

In a mountainous, solitary, dismal country, Titian also represented St Jerome, of the size of life. His bald head, austere visage, neglected snowy beard, the burnt skin, the shrunk muscles of his naked limbs, the look immoveably fixed on the cross, while the left knee is bent to the ground, and with the right hand holding a stone he is in the act of beating his breast, the human skull and the hour-glass close by, all designate the solitary penitent. The

right arm, the left leg, and the breast are naked; the other parts are covered by a purple mantle, indicating his dignity as a priest of the Roman church. Near the Saint is stretched a noble lion; and on the rock which rises near him are some open books. Most admirable is the effect of the light penetrating into the cave through a large aperture, through which the eye of the spectator wanders over the distant country, sprinkled with pleasant hills, clothed with fresh shrubs, and enamelled with the finest verdure; these assist wonderfully in augmenting the gloom of the cavern, which the Saint has chosen for the scene of his meditations. This excellent painting Titian sent with the preceding one of Religion to Charles the Fifth, who carried it with him to the monastery of St Just, as a work corresponding to his new resolutions.

While he thus satisfied the pious wishes of the august Charles, the indefatigable artist did not fail also to gratify Prince Philip, who had begun to love him as well as his father, and who Titian well knew was shortly to take possession of his father's dominions. He therefore sent him in 1553 a duplicate, with very few alterations, of the Danae admitting the embraces of Jupiter, in the disguise of a shower

of gold, which he had done seven years before for the Duke of Farnese. For this he was magnificently rewarded by Philip. The following year Titian did not fail to send him, according to promise, the fine *poem* (as he called it) of Venus and Adonis; which, differing from the Danae, which was seen all in front, displayed the opposite view of the figure:—a marvellously fine picture, which, though coming from the hand of a painter seventy-seven years old, seems a work of his best age, and of which infinite copies were spread throughout Italy and elsewhere, besides a few duplicates which Titian amused himself with doing as presents for his kindred and friends. Ludovico Dolce, a man of very excellent taste, and a good judge of painting, speaks in the highest terms of this picture.*

In 1553 Titian lost in the Doge Francesco Donato an illustrious protector and friend; he was succeeded by Marc Antonio Trevisano. Our artist fulfilled the duty of his office by painting his portrait of the size of life; but he had hardly finished it before he had to begin that of Francesco Venieri, who succeeded Trevisano after the short space of one year.

* See his letter in the first volume, p. 343.

This was the seventh and last portrait of the Doges of Venice that Titian did; for the two Priuli, Pietro Loredano, and Luigi Mocenigo, who successively held the reins of government during the latter part of the long life of our artist, excused him, in consideration of his advanced age, from the obligation of portraying them. Of these fine works, one only or two were preserved from the fatal destruction of the ducal palace by fire; but many duplicates remained, which Titian did at the request of the Doge's relations; independent of those he introduced in the histories, which, being done in his best years, and being rich in other figures, were the most valuable. This was a most fatal loss, which neither Paul Veronese nor Tintoret (who though they could not rival Titian in every thing, had still many excellences which hardly fell short of his) could repair, as it happened in their old age; nor the younger professors who were far from inheriting the talents of the former.

CHAPTER XL.

DEVOTIONAL WORKS FOR PHILIP THE SECOND, KING OF SPAIN, AND TWO FABULOUS ONES OF DIANA AND CALISTO—DEVOTIONAL WORK FOR THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND, AND FOUR MYTHOLOGICAL ONES FOR THE SAME—TITIAN'S BUST IN BRONZE IN THE PORCH OF THE SACRISTY OF ST MARK'S, AND MEDALS COINED IN HIS HONOUR—FOUR OTHER MYTHOLOGICAL WORKS FOR PHILIP THE SECOND, AND SOME VENUSES—PICTURES OF A DOUBTFUL PERIOD, DONE FOR THE COURT OF SPAIN—DEATH OF PETER ARETIN.

When we reflect on the many works on every subject, sacred and profane, from 1550 to 1565, which Titian did for the Court of Spain, for the Queen of England, for churches, for noblemen and friends of his at Venice and in other cities; and consider the excellence of the work, it makes us forget that they were done in his extreme old age. His engagement with the renowned Charles for the pictures of the Trinity, of Religion, and of St Jerome, did not permit

him to finish as soon as he wished the works ordered of him by the new King of England, Philip the Second, and Queen Mary, his consort. He did not fail, however, to send him by degrees, as soon as he had finished them, one work after another; and before 1558 he had already sent him a *Christ in the Garden*, with other devotional works; and had already prepared the pictures of Diana at the fountain, and Calisto. It happened unfortunately that in the journey the *Christ* was lost; wherefore, King Philip wrote to Titian so to contrive that the other pictures might incur no harm, and ordered him to do another *Christ, as he did not wish to be bereft of so fine a work*. This letter from Philip is given at length in Ridolfi: it is written in the Spanish language, and bears the date of the 13th of July 1558. And as Titian used to keep by him some duplicate or the first sketch of his most elaborate works, he was able in a short time to satisfy the royal wish. It would be a long and tedious labour to describe individually every work Titian did for the Court of Spain; and I shall content myself with the principal of them from time to time, as I come to the period at which they were finished.

In the thick horrors of a dark night, near an

ancient tree, his knees on the earth, his hands and face lifted towards heaven in a suppliant attitude, is seen Jesus Christ, illuminated by the bright glory of an angel of God, who presents to him the cup of grief. At a short distance, lying on the ground in different attitudes, are some of his disciples asleep, on whom, through the clouds which darken heaven, descends a faint ray of the moon. On the other side, led by the treacherous disciple, advances a troop of armed men with a torch, which, casting its glare on those nearest it, leaves the next in an uncertain light, and the rest in an almost total darkness. The impression of these three different lights reminds the spectator of the famous fresco of St Peter in prison, by Raphael; but in the last the quiverings of the light are stronger, as being in a more confined place, and surrounded by walls which reflect the rays. On the other hand, the action represented by Titian, being in a place not confined by walls or any thing to circumscribe the limits, allows the lights to grow insensibly fainter, till they are entirely lost among the surrounding masses of shade. And it is a remarkable thing, how Titian, who always liked open, bold lights, could, with so much skill and truth, show the effects of three opposite lights; —which effects,

how much more wonderful must they have been while the tints of the picture were yet quite fresh! Titian had done few things in this manner till his seventy-fifth year, as is manifest by the light penetrating through the crevice of the rock in the St Jerome, and by the shade of the leaves which falls on the sleeping Cupid in the fable of Venus and Adonis; an artifice particularly fine, and done as it were by the hand of nature; but he proved what he was able to do in the Christ praying in the garden.

The picture of Diana at the fountain, turning the indiscreet Actæon into a stag, is full of life and motion. That of Calisto is full of tender sadness; in it are figures of naked women, so well expressed and in such beautiful and varied attitudes, that even if one does not know the story, one can easily understand what the picture means. The Diana was engraved by Cornelio Cort.*

Not long after 1554, he had to finish a picture for Queen Mary on a devout subject; and after that, four others on mythological subjects, the figures of the size of life; these were, Prometheus bound to a rock, while an eagle,

* These are probably the same that are at present in the possession of the Marquis of Stafford.

perched on his knee, is cruelly tearing out his entrails; Sisyphus condemned to roll a large stone up a mountain, as a punishment for having disclosed the secret loves of Jupiter and Egina; Tityus, who with his large limbs covering nine acres of land, is condemned to the same punishment as Prometheus, for offering violence to Latona; and finally Tantalus, immersed in water up to the chin, and close to the most exquisite food, without being ever allowed to taste either. The Roman editor of the Lives of Vasari says that all these pictures were engraved on copper.

At this time Jacopo Sansovino had a commission from the procurators of St Mark, to do a bronze-cast over the door of the sacristy of that church, which proved to be a stupendous work; in this wishing to leave a lasting testimony of the friendship which had united him for so many years to Titian and Aretin, he did in three heads which project out, his own portrait and those of his two most intimate friends. Nor was Sansovino the only one who endeavoured to leave in bronze a lasting memorial of our artist; Varino and Cornelio, who at that time divided the glory of making medals of the most illustrious men, coined two in honour of Titian. In that by Varino, which is of a larger

size than the other, is seen the head of Titian, a front face, full of majesty, with the words, *Vera Titiani effigies*, and underneath, in small characters, *Varino*. In the other, Titian is drawn in profile, with the inscription, *Titianus, pietor et eques*, and under the bust the initial C. On the reverse is seen a Fame sounding two trumpets, preceded by a winged boy carrying a lighted torch. These two medals are to be found in the Museo Mazzucchelliano, vol. 1st, plate 80. The editor of that work supposes the lesser medal to be a copy of the larger one: but besides the difference of inscription and the addition of the reverse, the one is in profile and the other a front face.

When Titian sent King Philip, in 1554, the picture of Venus and Adonis, he wrote to him that he would soon send the story of Perseus and Andromeda, which should have a different view from the first, and also Medea and Jason. Wherefore, though there is nothing certain known about it, it is necessary to suppose that he was not long in putting his promises, at least in some measure, into effect; and we may therefore reckon among Titian's works from 1554 to 1558, the Perseus and Andromeda, of which Vasari gives a favourable account, though he does not mention the Medea and Jason, which

was probably done at the same period, or a little later. The four pictures of the Danae, the Venus and Adonis, the Andromeda and Perseus, and the Medea and Jason, being all intended for one chamber, the judicious painter contrived, in order to give them greater beauty, that the females should each be seen in a different view and in a different attitude. To these we may add the Rape of Europa, a picture possibly finished before that of Medea and Jason, with the story of Pan and Syrinx.

Three naked Venuses, of which neither Vasari nor Ridolfi make any mention, were still to be seen at the decline of the eighteenth century, in the new royal palace at Madrid. The first, of the size of life, is lying asleep on a couch, and is thought to be one of the finest naked figures that Titian ever did. The other, of the same size, lying also on a bed, is looking at a beautiful Cupid at her side, while another figure at the back of the picture is playing on an organ. In the last picture one admires a lovely Venus, of a size less than the other two, and nearly in the same attitude, caressing a little dog, which is done with the utmost truth of nature. It would be lost labour to endeavour to fix the precise date at which Titian did for the court of Spain these and many other works

with which the royal palaces are enriched; for, in addition to the works ordered of him by Charles and Philip, he also presented them with many duplicates of his best things at different periods, and received rewards suitable to the greatness of the patrons, and the excellence of the gift. Moreover, not a few of his pictures passed from Italy and other places to the court of Spain; such as the Bacchanals, a Venus, a portrait of the Pope, of which we shall shortly have occasion to speak, &c.; so that in no place, not excepting Venice, could there be seen so many, so fine, and so varied works of his, as in the palaces of Madrid and in the Escurial. It is therefore excusable in the Spanish writers that they should place Titian at the head of their school, and say he remained a long time in Spain; for such a mistake might very naturally arise. Nor do I intend to speak of all, both on account of the many things I should have to repeat of what has been already said, and because it would be too tedious to enumerate all the things of less importance which are to be seen there and elsewhere, and not without danger of ascribing to Titian that which is not his. Some of them, however, I shall now mention, as the best works of our artist, though the date of them is not known;

reserving the account of the last pictures he sent Philip to their proper place. We will give the first place to a picture representing, in a most beautiful country, our first mother in the act of plucking from the tree the forbidden fruit, and offering it to Adam to eat. In these two naked figures, of the size of life, Titian seems to have wished to fix the standard of the perfect shape of both sexes, such as we must suppose it to have proceeded at that time from the hand of the Eternal Author. I will not say, however, that our artist infused into them that *beau ideal* we so much admire in the first-rate works of antiquity; but there is not wanting all that is to be found in the most beautiful figures that nature could present to the painter. The happy scene in which man in his innocence dwelt is covered with fresh verdure and various animals; every thing, heaven, air, earth, is smiling. Of this picture the great Rubens did not disdain to make a copy, which was placed by the side of the original, most carefully imitated; but still, as he himself nobly said, it is only a faithful translation of an elegant Italian poem into the Flemish language.

At Villa Viciosa is preserved one of the most finished works Titian ever did in his best time for the Pesaro family. It represents, in figures

as large as life, the Pope, in his pontifical robes, with the mitre on his head, presenting a warrior to St Peter, to whom he commits at the same time the standard of holy church. This picture reminds us of the other similar one, done for the altar of the Pesaro chapel in the church of the Frari at Venice, already described, making it very likely that the warrior Pesaro in the present picture is the same Bishop Baffo, who was general of the holy church. Not less fine is a picture in the Escurial, representing in a pleasant country, with most verdant trees, the Virgin Mary seated and looking with tender complacency at St Catherine, who, kneeling before her, is caressing the divine child. Also kneeling at the Virgin's side is seen a sweet boy, who is looking with affectionate surprise at the Saint, near whom lies on the ground a piece of a broken wheel, and near the boy a lamb, executed in a most natural manner. The dress of the Virgin is simple; and the silk kerchief with which her head is covered, falling partly on her shoulders, discovers her white neck and part of her bosom: the dress of the holy martyr is very rich, and her head-dress very beautiful. On one side of the picture the eye wanders over a distant country, where are most beautiful groups of shepherds with herds

and flocks. A picture exactly resembling this is to be seen in the royal gallery at Florence.

It is probable that the picture of which I am about to speak, is that devotional one which Titian sent shortly after 1554 to Queen Mary of England, wife of prince Philip. It was afterwards presented to Philip the Fourth by Don Luigi Mendez d'Haro, who bought it in England at the sale of Charles the First's pictures. In it he did in figures less than life the Holy Family in the midst of a smiling country. Our Lady seated on a grassy bank is putting her face close to that of the child whom she is pressing to her bosom. St Joseph stands joyfully looking at them. In the adjoining landscape is painted a beautiful horse, led by a young countryman. I must not forget to observe that Titian had begun this picture when his son Horatio, as we shall see in his life, was painting a history for the hall of the greater Council-Chamber, in which the most admired part was a group with a horse held by a servant, which was said to have been retouched by his father. And not to digress from this subject, I will notice the grand picture of the Dominicans at Madrid, in which was represented the Holy Family resting in a pleasant spot full of all sorts of animals, and amongst

these the ass destined to carry the Divine Mother in the long pilgrimage to Egypt, which is feeding among some very fresh shrubs, a little way from the brink of a placid stream, where are some water-fowl that seem really alive. Mary, seated with the child in her lap, is looking at St Joseph, who is in the attitude of one who having rested prepares to re-enter upon his interrupted journey: he has already taken his stick, and having risen, is collecting together the scattered load. This was one of the subjects done by Titian in his youth.

The picture in the Escurial is particularly fine, in which Mary, seated with the child in her lap, is looking at St Joseph, who offers Jesus some cherries gathered by an angel from a neighbouring tree. It is impossible to express the excellence of the landscape, where the eye passes from one object to another till it is stopped by the azure mountains of the distant horizon. Some animals which are seen scattered here and there are full of nature. Another picture by Titian on this subject exists in the Imperial gallery of Vienna; the only difference is that in the latter it is the young St John who is offering Jesus some strawberries; and both St Joseph and St Joachim are present. And as so many eulogiums have been passed on the

Cristo della Moneta, that Titian painted in 1514 for the Duke of Ferrara, and which has been noticed in this work, I must not fail to observe that there is a duplicate of it in the Escurial; and another of extreme beauty, and without doubt by the hand of Titian, in the royal gallery of Florence. It is composed of two half-figures of the size of life; Jesus with a short beard divided almost to the chin, is looking at a man with a hooked nose, and a thick, uncombed beard, who giving him a piece of money, seems to expect an answer from our Saviour. On the upper part of the Pharisee's dress, near the neck, is written: *Titianus F.* The mild features and the sweet, tranquil look of our Redeemer form a most effective contrast to the face of the questioner, in which can be read the malevolent intentions of his heart. I have here described the picture in the royal gallery at Florence, which, according to Los Sanctos, was exactly similar to the one in the Escurial.

I do not think it was before this period that Titian drew the portrait of his friend Sperone Speroni, with whom he was on the most amicable terms, and who used on his visits to Venice, which were frequent, to be one of the guests of the Academy. He was afterwards the assiduous companion of Titian whenever he

came to Padua, where he liked to remain some months of every year.

Thus forgetting his great age of eighty, Titian undertook works on every subject and of the utmost importance, just as if he had still to think of acquiring name and fortune. But, besides the large sums he obtained by them, he found extreme pleasure in the task; for he fondly loved his art, which was also his greatest resource in the misfortune which befel him in the year 1557, taking from him his companion, his friend, his more than brother, Aretin; whose intimacy for more than thirty years, their mutual good offices, and their mutual esteem for each other's talents rendered so necessary to each, and both to Sansovino, that the surviving friends could not console themselves.

CHAPTER XLI.

JOURNEY OF TITIAN INTO FRIULI, AND HIS STAY AT TARCENTO AND SPILEMBERGO—TEACHES IRENE DA SPILIMBERGO AND NICOLO FRANGIPANE THE ART OF PAINTING—UNTIMELY DEATH OF IRENE, LAMENTED BY ALL THE POETS OF ITALY—TITIAN ATTACHES HIMSELF TO GIO. MARIA VERDIZZOTTI—HIS LAST WORKS FOR KING PHILIP THE SECOND—PICTURES OF SAN LORENZO FOR VENICE, AND TWO FOR ANCONA —WHOSE ARE THE TRIUMPHS OF PETRARCH?

To the comfort which Sansovino and Titian received from indefatigable application to their art, the latter thought of adding that of distance from the places which recalled to him at every step the memory of his departed friend. He therefore yielded to the pressing intreaties of Nicolo Frangipane, one of the lords of Tarcento, brother of Cornelio Frangipane, famous in the history of letters, who, charmed with painting, of which he had learnt the principles from other professors, wished to perfect himself under so great a master. Thither Titian repaired in the

best season; and was received as became his rank and talents. I do not know how long he stayed there, but it must certainly have been a considerable time; for during it, he had brought his pupil to do some pictures which all bear the stamp of the Titian school.

From Tarcento he went to the house of Adriano da Ponte, lord of Spilembergo, where he was eagerly desired by Irene, a virtuous young lady, his daughter; who having seen a portrait done of herself in a most natural manner by the celebrated paintress Sophonisba Anguisciola, and hearing it highly praised, was inflamed with an eager desire of equalling in painting that great lady, for in poetry, in dancing, in music, in embroidery, there was no one to surpass her. She had at first as a mistress a certain Campaspe, a friend of hers, who, for a lady, painted very well: and afterwards she was enabled to profit by the instructions of Titian, who remained in their house a month or six weeks, and with whom (as happens among worthy people) she contracted a very close friendship. Nor did our artist content himself merely with instructing the lady Irene, but he left in their illustrious family the portraits by his hands of Adriano da Ponte, and Julia his wife, and that of their daughter Irene.

After some months he returned to Venice, called by love for his relations and friends; and particularly for Sansovino, who after the death of their companion, could not live without Titian. But as if Heaven wished to atone to him for his approaching second loss, it brought him acquainted with Giovanni Maria Verdizzotti, a Venetian gentleman; who, not content with adding to nobility of birth a great reputation for knowledge of Greek and Latin literature, was desirous of also learning the art of painting. The gentle manners of this excellent young man acquired him the esteem of Titian, who till his death loved him as his own son, and took great pleasure in introducing him to his friends. The good old man was getting young again in the youth of two such illustrious friends as Verdizzotti and Irene da Spilembergo; when suddenly attacked by a violent fever, the most lovely, the most virtuous, and rarest lady of Italy ceased to live at the age of nineteen. All the poets contended in paying honour to her memory; and it was the common opinion that Titian himself wrote three Latin epitaphs on her, which are seen with his name in the collection of poems printed on that occasion. The first who began to doubt it was Apostolo Zeno; who seemed to think that the praises he gave

himself were too exaggerated. Zeno, however, did not call to mind that at this time there was another Titian Vecelli, not the nephew of the great painter, as the learned Cavalier Morelli supposes, but his cousin; who was no contemptible Latin and Italian poet, and a celebrated prose-writer, wherefore he had been created a knight by the Serene Senate; and he was in fact the author of the three epitaphs in question.*

Titian, overpowered by these sudden changes

* They are as follows:—

I.

Irene, Ausonias inter lectissima Nymphas,
Matribus Ausoniis mille petita Nurus
Mortales postquam, et terrestria numina torsit:
Cælestes torquet nunc Dea facta Deos.

II.

Egregia poteras spirantes fingere vultus
Pictura, et quod deest addere sola decus,
Ante diem tibi ni, Irene, vitalia nentes
Stamina solvissent tenuia fila Deæ.
Dixerat illacrimans prisco Titianus Apelle
Exprimere artifici doctior ora manu:
Cum mors cœlum, inquit, pictura ornarier hujus,
Dignum est: orbi unus tu, Titiane, sat es.

III.

Nunc arcu sine, nunc pharetra sine tristis et expers,
Errat Amor; posthac spicula nulla Deo:
Irenes arcusque inerant, et spicula ocellis.
Mors illos claudens pallida utrumque rapit.

from joy to sorrow, retired into the tranquil silence of his study, where his mind revolving the sublime images he had seen in beautiful nature, created those new fancies and those miracles of his ninetieth year, of which the examples are so rare in other instances. It is true his hand had no longer, as in his best time, the strength of his mind; but he had foreseen the failure, and had therefore for several years accustomed himself to a new method of painting, less united and careful than the former, but equally fine and wonderful. Vasari, after having seen in 1566 some performances in his new manner, which to less experienced professors seemed very easy, pronounced it fine and grand, and not to be learnt without much fatigue and very great skill. I do not, however, mean to say that he did not paint several things at this period in his former manner, so that the difference of style should not be considered a sufficient indication of the time to which the respective works belong. Without, however, troubling myself with this point, I will now notice the works he did from 1560 to 1565.

The Scourging of Christ, sent to the Queen of Portugal, was a most admirable painting, the figures rather less than life: but he surpassed himself in the picture of the Martyrdom of St

Lorenzo, done for Philip the Second, of which he presented a duplicate with numerous alterations to the church de' Croccicchieri at Venice. Stretched on a grating of iron, and already in many parts of his body scorched by the fire under him, the holy martyr Lorenzo is holding up one hand to receive the crown of laurel which an Angel brings him from heaven. The executioners standing round him are numerous, and all in varied and very natural attitudes. Three lights take away the darkness of the night, in which the action is supposed to take place; the lighted coals under the grate of the holy martyr, the fire of a tripod which burns before a Heathen statue, and the Angel who illumines in his descent from heaven, with an admirable effect, that mass of smoke which covers the upper part of the picture. The foreshortening is marvellously executed, and without perceiving them, immense difficulties most happily overcome. The figures are all rather larger than life. Titian was much pleased with this work, and across the grate wrote: *Titianus Vecellius Eques Cæsareus F.* Of this painting, besides the fine print by Cornelio, who engraved it in the presence of Titian, there was a smaller one by Sadeler. This is the finest of all Titian's histories; and considering

his age at the time he painted it, cannot be enough admired.*

For the Cardinal Alessandrino, nephew of Pope Pius the Fifth, he did a St Catherine, which he sent him by means of the Nuncio of Venice, at the beginning of 1566.

I have already described the Adoration of the Wise Men, which Titian did many years before for the church of St Stephen at Belluno. In his advanced age he now treated the same subject for Philip the Second; but with the exception of the group of the Holy Family and that of the worshippers who are seen prostrate before the Messiah, the rest is entirely different; both with respect to the number of figures, and the variety of dresses and country which is rather richer than in the first. I will here observe, however, that Titian did more than one duplicate of this picture; or perhaps those which are seen in Italy, resembling the one he sent into Spain, are only fine copies by his pupils. The picture in which Titian represented St Margaret mounted on a winged serpent is fine, both for a certain boldness of movement, and for truth of expression. Although the determined posture in which he represented her, shows the great-

* See Fuseli's criticism on it in the first vol. p. 339.

ness of her courage, yet in her face is seen that paleness of fear which is naturally wont to come upon minds the most firm in any sudden danger.

So celebrated is, and so many fine duplicates and copies are there of the picture of the Magdalen, that every body has an adequate notion of it: nor can I promise myself to be able to give a description worthy of it. Ridolfi relates that our artist took the idea from an antique marble statue of a lady; but that for a closer observation of natural effects he called in the assistance of a beautiful young woman, a neighbour of his, who placing herself in the proper attitude, and absorbed in the subject, shed tears plentifully, and showed in her face that sorrow which is so wonderfully expressed in the painting. Whether we consider the Magdalen with respect to the expression, the colouring, or the form, we must confess that a more beautiful design never came from the hands of any modern artist. The long, golden, flexible tresses falling on one side and covering part of the bosom and arms, instead of hiding them, assist in giving more beauty to the delicate skin, like a ray of the setting sun on a flake of spotless snow. Some one may say that so much beauty and grace ill become a penitent; but Titian

represented a noble lady who had but just abandoned the pleasures and luxury of a dissipated life. Wherefore the fine figure and colour suited her former condition; and for the penitent was reserved the noblest part of art, expression. It would be reasonable to suppose that the artist was well pleased with his work; for having, previously to sending it to Philip, to make a duplicate for Silvio Badoaro, a Venetian gentleman, he also did another duplicate for himself, which remained in his house till his death.* There was the original Magdalen a few years since in the Escurial; three in Venice, one in Florence, &c. These are all very fine; but I cannot assert as a certainty that all are original. The one I have just noticed was engraved by Cort, at the request of Titian himself.

There was also another very fine Magdalen, to whom Christ is presenting himself under the disguise of a gardener; this was also done for the court of Spain, when the artist was more than eighty.†

Finally, after seven years of interrupted labour he finished, in 1564, the famous Last

* It is still shewn there.

† There is a copy of this at the Duke of Devonshire's at Chatsworth.

Supper, which had been for some years promised to the King of Spain. He informed the latter of it in a letter, dated August of that year, saying that "he had done it with an intention of leaving him in this the latter part of his life, the greatest proof he could of his ancient devotion:" and certainly the gift was worthy of the monarch who received it, and not beneath the excellence of the venerable artist who did it. This great picture, which Titian began at eighty and finished at eighty-seven, has such truth in the motion of the figures, all larger than life, the countenances are so natural, the draperies so well managed, the *chiaro-scuro* so thoroughly understood, that without a comparison with his master-pieces it would be thought a production of his middle age. It is evident that the great artist being aware of the infirmities of old age, and perceiving that his hand no longer responded to the still unimpaired vigour of his mind, so that he could not give the finished perfection of his youth, made up for it by the most valuable parts of painting, expression and chasteness of invention. That mild gravity that is visible on the meek face of our Redeemer; the Apostles hanging on his words and still uncertain of the tidings he is about to impart; the simple architecture of the

room; the dark colour of the dresses, throw over the whole scene a something sad and solemn, which takes possession of our minds and forces us to identify ourselves with the action represented. The light which enters at the opposite window, deadened by the sombre colour of the walls, in a manner detaches the figures from the canvas, and makes them seem as if done in relief. In fine, all that the art and philosophy of Leonardo da Vinci had not forestalled on this subject, all that could still give nobleness and interest to the action, was not neglected by Titian. And if in some parts, compelled to follow the story, he imitated Leonardo, he did it freely, and made the work his own and original. For this picture he received from Philip two thousand crowns, and the payment of his pensions that had been kept back.

Vasari praises the picture which he did at this time for the church of St Dominic of Ancona; in which he painted Christ on the Cross, at the foot of which, in the most dejected attitudes, are the desolate mother and the well-beloved disciple John; to these, according to the wishes of the person who ordered the picture, he added St Dominic. And for the Wooden-shoed Friars of the same city, he also

painted another picture, not mentioned by Vasari, as it was probably done after 1566, but recorded by Barry and the editor of the Lives of Vasari published at Rome. But where do we not find works by Titian, or works attributed to him? Not only in different collections we are shown the works of the pupils as those of the master; but the works of others are even engraved and published as his. I will give a well-known instance of this. Four Triumphs of Petrarch were engraved at Rome about the middle of the last century, as excellent works of Titian; whereas it has been proved that they were, on the contrary, by Bonifazio, who in colouring and style often came near our artist.

To these works done for Ancona I will add another he did for the altar of the church of St Nicholas at Venice, in the year 1563. In this he represented the Saint seated on a piece of marble which appears real; near whom is a most beautiful Angel holding his mitre: a wonderful work done by slight dashes, but with extreme skill. Ridolfi and Vasari place it among the finest productions of his extreme old age. Nor is it to be wondered at; for as he used to say, he gave his whole soul to works entrusted to him by his friends; and this was

for one of his dearest associates, Signor Nicolo Crasso, a celebrated Venetian lawyer, whose portrait he had drawn some years before, and for whom he had also done a Magdalen, and a Venus looking at herself in the glass, near whom are two extremely handsome Cupids. But the most valuable thing he did for his friend Crasso was the picture of a beautiful girl having in her hand two small baskets of fruit, which is, it is said, a portrait of his own daughter Cornelia. Another lawyer also, Francesco Assonica, had of Titian, besides his own portrait, a duplicate of the Flight into Egypt, and a woman of the size of life, near whom is seen a girl playing on an organ. Ridolfi observes that in his time this latter picture had passed into England.

CHAPTER XLII.

SKETCHES DONE FOR THE MOSAIC-WORKS IN THE CHURCH OF ST MARK—JUDGMENT ON THE WORKS OF THE BROTHERS ZUCCATI—IN 1565, BEING AT CADORE, HE CREATES A NOTARY — PICTURES IN FRESCO IN THE CHURCH OF CADORE, DONE FROM THE SKETCHES OF TITIAN—ACT OF LEGITIMATION OF TWO NATURAL SONS, IN FAVOUR OF P. COSTANTINI — DEATH OF GIACOMO SANSOVINO — ARRIVAL AT VENICE OF THE ENGRAVER, CORNELIO CORT—TITIAN'S LAST WORKS—RECEIVES HENRY THE SECOND KING OF FRANCE AND HIS SUITE—HIS WORKS LEFT UNFINISHED—HIS DEATH.

I HAVE delayed till this period to speak of what Titian did to promote and perfect the mosaic-works which were repairing in the ducal church of St Mark, in order not to give scattered notices of it in several places. He did then for the brothers, Valerio and Francesco Zuccato (sons of that Sebastian, from whom he

had learnt the first rudiments of design) the sketches of that beautiful St Mark, dressed for performing mass, which is an object of admiration on the external front of the church over the great entrance; and those of the other figures within the porch, which are the finest things that are to be seen of the sort; and also the sketch of the Angel on the right of the great altar, who is in the act of sheathing his sword. Nor was the care of Titian limited to this; but availing himself of the great esteem in which he was held by the procurators of St Mark and the Serene Senate, he did not fail to represent to them, that they ought not to let slip the present opportunity, which the number of excellent artists in Venice offered, for adorning by their skill that Queen of the Ocean; and especially for repairing the mutilated and spoilt works in mosaic; promising the assistance of the greatest painters to provide excellent sketches for the mosaic masters. The advice of Titian was not neglected; and after his Cartoons, those of his son Horatio, of Tintoret, of Salviati, of Paul Veronese, &c. they executed in that church the finest mosaics in the world.

At length it happened that Bozza and other masters, envying the glory of the brothers

Zuccato, from whom they had learnt the art, accused them of not having faithfully copied the designs, and of having painted some things from them instead of working them in mosaic. Nor was the accusation entirely void of foundation: for the Zuccati having been informed that in the words of an inscription there occurred a grammatical error; that it might not be observed by others, they put over it a piece of paper painted in imitation of mosaic, which was left undone, with the intention of afterwards correcting it properly. And they had also done in colours a small temple, borne in the hand of some figure (I do not know whom) placed near the ceiling. Their reputation was not great enough to rebut such doubtful charges; and Titian, Sansovino, and Tintoret were commanded by the procurators of St Mark to enquire into the matter, and pass their judgment. The scaffolds were placed where the defects were indicated, and with a solemn formality of judgment the old artists, having carefully and minutely examined every thing, universally agreed that the works of the Zuccati were the best; but the other part of the accusation was found to be true. Titian wished to screen them and succeeded. "If the parts done in colours," said the sage old man, "are

marked in the sketch, the Zuccati are guilty: if they are arbitrary additions to give greater beauty to the work, they were not obliged to do them in mosaic." The Cartoons were compared, and the Zuccati acquitted.

Titian, at the age of almost ninety, must have enjoyed sound health to undertake, as he did, the long and troublesome journey to Cadore, where he was wont to enjoy himself for some months during the pleasant season. I will not venture to say that at the close of his life he repaired there every year; but he certainly did very frequently; and he was there, without doubt, in the autumn of 1565, as is proved by a public act in which he creates Faustus, formerly Michael Vecelli, a notary. This instrument is dated the 1st of October 1565; and the following persons are named as witnesses: Valerio Zuccato of Venice; Matteo Palatini, notary of the parish; Emmanuel Amlerfer of Vienna, painter; and Marco Vecelli, son of Titus, painter. The instrument, the original of which is in the Library *Della Salute* at Venice, was written by Giovanni Genova.

The principal parish-church of Cadore was at this time about to be rebuilt; and the inhabitants wished that their noble painter should leave in it some convincing proof of his talents

and love for his country, by painting in fresco the choir of the great altar. Titian was not at all averse to satisfy their desires, on condition that they would be content if his pupils should execute the work from designs and cartoons done by his own hand, his great age and the many works he had to finish not permitting him to burden himself with so extensive an undertaking. The next year, his fellow-citizens availed themselves of this offer; and by a resolution passed in council on the 18th of June, they invited Titian *to send his pupils immediately to execute the plan of the painting of the church: certain that it will be a fine and praiseworthy work, suitable to the Majesty of the house of God, and the reputation of so great a painter, and also to the love which every one ought to bear his country.* He contented himself with a reward of two hundred zecchins, since he had intended the picture to gratify his fellow-citizens, and agreed that the money should be paid in the manner most convenient to them. The work was begun the same year, and finished in 1567. It comprehends the ceiling and two side pictures. In the four central compartments at the top were painted in figures of the size of life the four Evangelists, with their respective attributes, on light clouds in

an azure ground; and in those over the altar are two most beautiful Angels, clothed in a transparent veil, which reaches down rather lower than the knees, presenting to the Virgin the Sceptre and Crown. In the compartment in front of the altar, which joins the arch of the choir, is seen another Angel, to whom the artist has given a very lively movement, as becomes a celestial creature, who is mounting to heaven with the triumphant banners of the cross. The other two recesses of the ceiling form part of the side pictures. In that on the right, he painted an Annunciation, a beautiful young woman, kneeling on a stool, under a large pavilion of green stuff, who, in the mild aspect of her eyes and the modest blush that tinges her face, shows the surprize of her timid thoughts at seeing before her the celestial messenger, in whom, I must confess, a greater elegance of form and vivacity of motion would be desirable. In the angle of the ceiling over this is prominent among the clouds the figure of the Eternal Father extending his open arms to the Virgin; while from the celestial Dove, emblem of the Holy Ghost, a ray of glory lights upon her. The suavity of her countenance, the expression of the feelings with which the Virgin is affected, the beauty of her

limbs, form, in my opinion, the most valuable part of this picture. On the opposite side he has represented the Birth of Jesus. The grouping of the Virgin and Child are in every way equal to that of the Manger at Belluno, already described ; but in this, the figure of St Joseph, both for the attitude and the expression of his face, in which one sees the pleasure and admiration which he feels, is far superior to the former one. From the left side some shepherds are seen approaching; one of whom leading the ox, is in the most natural and picturesque posture that can possibly be imagined. Beyond them is seen an open country sprinkled with herds and flocks ; and in it are some fine trees. A glory of Angels, such as was wont to come from the hand of so great an artist, occupies the upper part of the picture. I must not omit a St John and a Magdalen on the external sides of the grand arch that divides the choir of the church; in the semicircle of which, done in eight compartments, are painted in half-figures eight of the Prophets. At the base of the arch is marked in colours MDLXVI. The destruction of these paintings which had been threatened for some years, in order to rebuild the church, took place in 1813.

I will relate another act arising out of the

prerogative conferred on Titian by the Imperial charter which created him Knight and Count Palatine, which was executed by him in his own house at Venice in 1568, in favour of the reverend priest Pietro Costantini, curate of St Vitus, who had intreated him to legitimate two young men; this and the preceding are sufficient to show that Titian exercised freely the privileges conferred on him by the munificence of Charles the Fifth. On the back of this instrument is written: *Act of legitimation granted by Titian to the intreaties of the reverend priest Pietro Costantini, curate of St Vitus in Cadore, for his two sons, that is to say, Antony, aged nineteen, and John Baptist, aged seventeen, had by Donna Maria, daughter of Giacomo Perini of St Vitus, paid for by him.* The instrument was published in Venice in the house of the painter and Knight Titian Vecelli, in the street San Canziano, in the presence of Lodovico Pinelli, a Venetian gentleman; Marc' Antonio Crisi, a nobleman of Verona; and Emmanuel of Vienna, a painter and his friend; it was written by Thomas Titus Vecelli, son of Antony, a notary of Cadore. This Peter Costantini is the same priest, at this time a young man, who, as we shall see in the life of Francesco Vecelli, is presented in the picture done by the latter for the

church of St Vitus by the protecting Saint to the Virgin Mary.

Two years after this, Titian lost Giacomo Sansovino, whom similar age and talents had for more than forty years bound to him in the strictest friendship, rendered still more intimate and necessary by the death of their other inseparable friend Peter Aretin. It is not possible to express the grief of our artist at this loss, who, at the age of ninety-three, had no longer any one to recal to his mind the gay festivities of the happy period of their Academy. However, this blow did not discourage him, nor slacken his accustomed application to study. I will not say that the works done after this period can be compared with those before it; but I am unwilling to believe a common tradition that he was so far weakened in mind and body, that he went to work spoiling all the pictures he had in his house, thinking to improve them; in consequence of which his pupils prepared his colours on the pallet with oil of olive, so that they might easily erase from the canvas what he added. Some visions from the Apocalypse are productions of his extreme old age; they were done for the monastery of St John, and in them is to be still discerned the vivid imagination and free colouring of the

great master; and those beautiful boys and those whimsical grotesques that surround them, call to mind the works of his best time. Ridolfi himself, who saw it when in better condition, bears witness that the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, in the great altar of St Saviour's at Venice, was done in a very able style. It would be a bold thing to deny what is said of the other picture of the Annunciation done for the same church, of which it is related, that it not appearing to those who had ordered it of the same excellence with his other works, they sent it back to him, that he might give it a greater degree of perfection. But I will observe here, that the grand picture also of the Ascension, which he painted in his youth for the church of Santa Maria dei Frari, did not please that Fraternity, it being done with a stronger and bolder pencil-ing than was usual for works of a small size. However, if it were sent back to him in order that he might improve it, and he returned it, adding only, *Titianus fecit, fecit*, it is proper to observe that other people thought him quite capable of giving beauty to his works; and that he was not accustomed, when he had done a fine work, to retouch and thereby to spoil it.

In the year 1570 came to Venice one Cornelio Cort, a Fleming, and an excellent engraver on

copper; when Titian, wishing to publish the prints of his various works, as we have already noticed in different places, lodged him in his house. And not only did he make him engrave many paintings, but also various inventions and fancies which he drew at the time; among which Ridolfi mentions the Drowning of Pharoah and his Host, in a great many parts; a Madonna, painted for the tomb of Luigi Trevisani in St John and St Paul; Sampson and Dalilah, and some sketches of shepherds and animals. But the print which made most noise was one of three Monkeys, sitting with Serpents twisted round them in the manner of the Belvidere Laocöon. This Titian designed not so much to bring the Laocöon into contempt as to censure the pedantry of some pretended painters, who could not do a single figure without having before them the Laocöon or some other antique; so that when they had to make a sketch, they laid all the first-rate works of antiquity under contribution, taking the head from one, the trunk from another, the hands from this, the feet from that, and so on, till they had made such a daub out of this antique, that it turned out to have neither life, motion, nor meaning in it. These were servile imitators, who patched up, not painted, like that versifier in Horace, who, taking the verses and thoughts

from different poems, pretended that he had made a book of his own!

The name of Titian had obtained such veneration, that Henry the Third, the new King of France, being at Venice in 1574, visited him in his own house, where he went with his numerous suite of princes and great lords. The aged artist received him with dignified respect, and with those easy and noble manners which were peculiar to him; and, as old men are accustomed, talked to him a long while about the vicissitudes of his own life, and pleased himself in particular with relating the singular favours he had received from Charles the Fifth and King Ferdinand. In the meanwhile, he caused his domestics to give a splendid entertainment to the courtiers of his Majesty and the train who accompanied him; so that they seemed to be in the palace of a great prince, instead of the house of an artist. Nor was the generosity of Titian confined to this; for being asked by the king the price of some pictures that pleased him, he intreated him to accept of them as a gift.

But although Titian did not want either for spirit or health, and continued in the usual tenor of his life, he was fully aware of the impending dangers of so advanced an age; and

as one who had always led a temperate life, and fulfilled the duties of an excellent citizen and an esteemed artist, he tranquilly prepared himself by the consolations of philosophy and religion to pay the debt that every mortal owes to nature. And it is an evident proof of his piety and courage that he for a long time busied himself in a devotional work, which he intended for the chapel of the Crucifix in the church of the Frari at Venice, where he had obtained permission for his ashes to repose. Nor did the aspect of approaching death frighten him; nor take him from his beloved occupations; nor sour the sweetness of his disposition. And at nearly the age of one hundred years, he brought to perfection that picture which was, instead of a sepulchral inscription, to have borne witness to his talent and virtue, had not the monastery, who granted him a place in the chapel of their church, made pretexts for afterwards withdrawing it; and he left orders in his will that he would be buried in the parish-church of his native Cadore, in the chapel belonging to his family, which, however, was not put into effect through fear of the contagion, of which he at last died.

He had also begun another picture of our dead Saviour in the arms of his weeping mother,

whom St Jerome is supporting; and the Magdalen lamenting with outstretched hands. He was painting this for the chapel of Christ in the church of the Frari, on account of which he had obtained permission to lie there; but he being long about it, or, as some have it, because they did not wish to lose their old Crucifixion, which is to be seen there, he did not finish it; but it was afterwards completed by the hand of Palma, who wrote this humble inscription on it:

QUOD. TITIANUS. INCHOATUM. RELIQUIT
PALMA. REVERENTER. PERFECIT.
DEOQUE. DICAVIT. OPUS.

Titian also left various other works imperfect at his death; among which is a fine portrait of himself, and a picture of Adam and Eve, which was perhaps a duplicate of the one sent to the Court of Spain. In this he only finished the Eve, but it was done with such beauty that the great Tintoret undertook to complete the Adam, Giacomo Bassano the animals, and Ludovico Pozzo, the beautiful Garden of Eden.

Titian having thus nearly attained his hundredth year, did not fail to exercise himself daily in that art which he had adorned, and by

which he had made his name great and famous throughout Europe; when the plague, which had already been raging for some months in Trent, showed itself also in Venice at the beginning of the hot weather; but as at first it spread but slowly, and was not accompanied by very bad symptoms, some thought, or wished to make the terrified people think, that it was not the Eastern plague, but an epidemic disease caused by the long drought. To give strength to this opinion, which was loudly contradicted by the Venetian physicians, Girolamo Mercuriale and Girolamo Capodivacca, the most famous doctors who were then read in that part of science, were sent for from Padua to Venice; who having declared for the milder opinion, were the cause that the most useful precautions which private people and the government took were neglected; wherefore the contagion spread through the populous city of Venice with such wonderful celerity, that in a few months it brought to the tomb a third of the inhabitants, and among them our Titian, who had requested (but too late) to retire to his native place, which at the first spreading of the fatal pestilence had prudently cut off all communication with the towns attacked by so great a calamity. The Senate of Venice, who on

account of his extraordinary talents had exempted him from a tax imposed on all the other citizens, also departed at his death from the general rule, which deprived all those who died of the plague of the honours of burial, and permitted his venerated remains to be deposited in the church of the Frari; but on account of the unhappy state of the times, without the honours which the Venetian painters had intended for their greatest master. In Ridolfi is an account at length of the order of the proposed funeral, the preparations, and the inscriptions. The *insignia* of a knight were laid with him in the tomb; but ungrateful posterity did not allow his grave a stone to show the spot under which reposed the honoured ashes of the man who heaped such glory on his country, on Italy, and on his art. Forty-five years after, young Palma erected a monument to the common glory of Titian, of his grandfather Giacomo Palma, and himself, in the church of St John and St Paul at Venice, with the following inscription:

TITIANO VECELLIO.
JACOPO. PALMA. SENIORI. JUNIORIQUE.
AERE. PALMEO.
COMMUNI GLORIA.
MDCXXI.

The monument was to have been adorned with bronzes, marbles, and paintings, done by his hand; but finally it was reduced to a decoration in painting in three niches, in two of which young Palma placed the marble busts of Vecelli and his own grandfather, leaving the third empty, which received his own bust after his death, which took place in 1628.

Another more splendid monument was in 1794 projected to Titian's memory, which was to have been executed by an artist, born near his native place, and emulating the glory and the social virtues of the great Vecelli; but owing to the vicissitudes of the times, it was never carried into effect.

The plan of this work, which was to have been done by the illustrious Canova, was as follows: "The monument was to consist of a grand pyramidical sepulchre, with an open door half-way up, which was to be ascended by three steps. On the last of these on the left side, in the act of entering, stood Painting covered with a veil, which gave the idea of inexpressible grief. At her side is an Angel supporting her attributes; and behind her, with sad gestures, come the two sister-arts; Sculpture on the second step, Architecture on the first; the one

leaning on the other, with their attributes strewed on the steps. On the right hand of the door is stretched a sorrowing lion, emblematical of the Venetian school. Over the door, in a medallion held by the two geniuses of Fame, in bas-relief, is seen a carved portrait of Titian." Some Venetian gentlemen, lovers of the art, had offered to bear the expense of this fine work.*

* Being seized with the plague, which in 1576 raged with so much destructive fury in Venice, Titian found himself stretched on the same bed of death with his beloved son Horatio, whom he had educated with so much care in his own profession, without a single friend or relation who with pious hands might administer the last offices of consanguinity and friendship. While he was breathing out his last sighs, a body of impious ruffians, rendered bold by impunity and the dispersion of the magistrates, entered his chamber, and carried off from before his very eyes, his money, jewels, and rich furniture, and what was much more distressing, the recent designs and studies of his best works, besides many most valuable pictures, of which he had never consented to deprive himself at any price, regarding them as the rarest productions of his pencil. The plague being over, and the passages newly opened, all that had escaped the robbers, and all that could be recovered of the stolen property by means of law, was sold at a very low price by the priest Pomponio, his second son, who came post from Milan to Venice to squander in a few months his paternal inheritance; whilst this most ungrateful son left the bones of his great father to lie unhonoured in an humble and unknown grave, without even the respect of a stone to point it out to the passing traveller. Thrice was it projected in Venice to honour his memory by the erection of a public monument, and

thrice was the execution of this prevented by the malice of an adverse fortune. The first to form such a noble project were the painters of Venice; and there is to be seen in Ridolfi a description of the magnificent obsequies which were to have been celebrated on this occasion in the church of their protector, St Luke: but not being able to perform the sacred duty on account of the Sanitary laws, then in full force, the affair cooled, nor does it appear to have been ever thought of afterwards.

CHAPTER XLII.

ACCOUNT OF FRANCESCO VECELLI, TITIAN'S BROTHER.

Among the principal families of the province of Cadore, which deserved well of that country, a very illustrious one was that of the Vecelli, which had produced mayors, syndics, notaries, lawyers, and signors, who by protection and advice had powerfully assisted it from about the year 1200 up to the time we are speaking of. Among others, Gregory Vecelli, son of Conte, had a very high reputation for integrity, for singular goodness and courtesy, and for great skill in the management of his country's affairs. This gentleman had, in 1475, by Lucia his wife (a woman endowed with singular virtues) a son, who was named Francesco, after his maternal grandfather. According to the state of the country and the nobility of his family, and as

Gregory possessed a respectable fortune, he found himself in every way disposed to give his first-born son a liberal education, that treading in the path of his ancestors, he might become useful and honourable to his family and country. Those who are born in large and rich cities, or in places freed by them, and who know only the customs of their own and the neighbouring generations, altogether corrupted and debased, cannot persuade themselves that men possessed of genius and sufficient fortune to live at their ease, can preserve such affection to the poor country in which they were born, as to consecrate to it their talents, their wealth, and their lives. Yet such has always been the influence of love for our native land, if it were not altogether enslaved, on men of all times, countries, and rank. The country of Cadore, though for many ages governed sometimes by the patriarchs of Grado, sometimes by the princes of Tyrol, sometimes by the lords of Cammino, and finally placed under the mild rule of the Venetian Senate, always preserved its own laws, its own customs, and magistrates ; and its children thought the title of *Men of Cadore* equally glorious and valuable, as an Athenian or Roman the citizenship of their illustrious countries.

Gregory, animated by this virtuous ambition,

sought also to inspire his son with it; so that neither distance of time nor the allurements of the capital, nor the honours of war, nor the riches which the profession of painting held out to him, could ever cancel that fond attachment to his native place which had been infused into his youthful mind. His father's intentions were forwarded by the ancient institutions of Cadore, appointing in the chief borough of the Pieve, where the assemblies of the province met, Greek and Latin masters with liberal salaries; by which means, the youth who were destined for the bar, for medicine, or literature, were not obliged to go out of the country to study them until the feelings of home were so engraved and strengthened in their minds by years, that they would not be extinguished by foreign manners without much difficulty.

Nor is it likely that Francesco would have been sent, when a mere boy of twelve years old, to Venice, had it not been for the extraordinary inclination for painting manifested by his younger brother Titian. Recommended to his paternal uncle Antonio, he had the same masters as his brother; but we do not know what advance he made in the art, or to what other studies he applied himself before entering the army. The Anonymous Author

and Ridolfi think that Francesco did not quit painting before the fierce war which the Venetian Republic had to sustain against the great powers assembled to her cost in the League of Cambray. But according to this, he must have been thirty-four at the time, and already an experienced artist; whereas in his funeral eulogium he is said to have entered the army when he had just begun to learn design, that is to say, at about eighteen or twenty; for which reason, not having attended any more to the art till his thirty-seventh or thirty-eighth year, at which period he left his profession of a soldier, he had to begin again, in the school of his brother Titian, the art he had so long neglected.

We must therefore admit, if only as a probable conjecture, that Francesco, animated as he was by love for his native country, became a soldier when the Venetian Republic, alarmed at the wonderful good fortune and ambitious projects of Charles the Eighth, King of France, resolved, though late, yet more opportunely than ever, to unite her forces to those of Sforza and other Italian princes, to oppose the victorious prince, who was returning from his expedition to Naples; and it is easy to suppose that our Vecelli made one of those brave soldiers who at the battle of Taro revived the extin-

guished glory of the Italian arms. The author of the funeral oration favours my opinion, who says that he enrolled his name among the soldiers, not to remain in the Venetian territories, but to see the most famous things in the other cities of Italy. But although the ancient records neither inform us directly of the period when, nor the reasons why he dedicated himself to the profession of arms, they certify to us that he exercised it honourably, and exposed himself for the sake of the Republic to every sort of danger and hardship; and he gave great proofs of singular bravery, particularly during the war of the League of Cambray.

As the insolence of the enemy increased daily, who thought the soldiers of the Republic inferior to themselves both in numbers and valour; Francesco did not endure the insults of an adversary who challenged him, and obliged him in single combat to lay down his arms and owe his life to the conqueror. But, being dangerously wounded in an engagement, Titian, who loved him very much, profiting by the peace which the Republic had made with some hostile powers, induced him to quit the army, and lodged him kindly in his house, encouraging him when he was recovered from his wound, to resume the study of painting. And although

the best part of his youth had been dedicated to war, he profited so much by the instructions of his brother, that in a short time he became known as an excellent painter. It is probable that some of the first works he did were the four pictures at the entrances to the organ at St Saviour's, in one of which he painted an armed St Theodore in such a grand and resolute manner, that it approached the style of Giorgione. In his right hand he holds a standard, and on the left arm a shield with the figure of the cross on it; and he is looking up at a beautiful cherub, who brings him from heaven the palm of martyrdom. He did on the other side St Augustin, dressed in pontifical robes, near whom stand certain priests, in whose faces it is said he drew some of the monks of that monastery. In one of the opposite pictures he represented the Transfiguration, and in the fourth the Resurrection: all these were fine works, and done with much spirit and feeling. He did some other things in fresco in the same church and convent, which are mentioned by Mark Boschini; but Ridolfi takes no notice of them in his very short life of Francesco. These are, St Leonard freeing some prisoners; various Angels in *chiaro-scuro* in the angles of the cupola; and in an oval space in the middle of

the ceiling of the sacristy, he did also in fresco the Divine Saviour blessing some beautiful children who are standing round him; and also some frescos in the convent representing Pope Corraro, Gregory the Twelfth, instituting the monks of St Saviour's; and Pope Eugenius the Fourth, Condulmero, granting them a bull.

These things, done in one of the principal places in Venice, raised him to great credit; and caused his being sought out by many people to do other works which they could not get from Titian; whence he painted for the company of Bombardiers, a banner representing the Virgin Mary receiving under her protection some of the brotherhood pourtrayed from life; he did another for the church of St Eustochio; and a third, but somewhat later, and perhaps after he had turned merchant, for the brotherhood of the Zoppi at Venice, in which he painted a beautiful Madonna, at whose feet are seen two cripples in such true and natural attitudes that they seem alive.

But the two other famous works that he did before leaving Venice, are the pictures of the great altar in the church of Oriago on the Brenta, and of the altar of St Ludovico in that of the *Wooden-shoed Friars* of Campo Sampiero. In the former is represented Christ after his

Resurrection presenting himself in an humble garb to Mary Magdalen. Perhaps it might be desirable that in the figure of the Redeemer there were greater beauty of form and more expression, which perhaps however was not intended by the artist, who knew that he appeared to the Magdalen under the guise of a common man. The light blue drapery that covers him, assists not a little in bringing him in the front of the canvas, and in giving a greater degree of brightness to his reddish complexion, differing from that of the Magdalen, which is very delicate, as becomes a noble lady. Two Angels are standing further behind the sepulchre, which is situated under a mass of rock, at the side of which is an opening, through which the eye wanders over so beautiful and smiling a country, that it makes one almost forget the principal object.

The upper part of the centre of the picture of Campo San Piero is occupied by Our Lady, to whom a beautiful little Angel is presenting with an infantine gesture the name of Jesus. On one side is prominent St Louis royally habited, in whose brocade mantle are seen golden *fleurs-de-lys*. I will add to this another work done in fresco at Venice, in the palace of St Mark: this is, near the picture of the Virgin done by Titian

at the bottom of the covered staircase, Christ Rising from the Dead, with various soldiers in different attitudes near the empty sepulchre.

But whatever advances Francesco made in painting, he well knew that he would never be able to overtake Titian, who daily continued to increase in fame and skill. He was moreover continually instigated to return by consideration for his parents, now arrived at extreme old age, as well as love for his native country, rendered still stronger in his heart by so long an absence; wherefore having apprised his brother, to whom he owed so much, of his determination, and having obtained his consent, he repaired to his birth-place, with the intention of applying himself to trade for his own advantage and that of his fellow-citizens. But such was the goodness and disinterestedness of Francesco, that instead of benefiting himself, he rather lost by trade, being a man who exercised it honourably, and always had a greater regard for his own good name and the welfare of his country, than desire to increase his own wealth.

In the foregoing explanation of the motives which induced Francesco not to abandon painting, which he did not do till he was more than sixty, but to retire to his native place to his aged parents, I have closely followed the

account given by the author of his funeral oration, as a writer in every way worthy of credit; and because the fellow-citizen, relation, and friend of Francesco, and a man of so great a reputation as Vincentio Vecelli, could not be supposed guilty of such an imprudence as to say what was not true in the presence of the very inhabitants of the Pieve of Cadore, well acquainted with all the circumstances of the life of their illustrious countryman, who had died the same day. However, as in consequence of the assertions of Ridolfi and the Anonymous Author, people have begun to believe, and indeed it is the general opinion, that Titian himself, taking umbrage at the progress his brother made in painting, induced him, by obtaining for him exemptions and other favours, to give himself up to trade,—to clear Titian from so injurious an imputation and confute Ridolfi and the other author, it will be sufficient to examine the principal epochs of Francesco's life. At the time he quitted the army, the war of the League was but just over; and after remaining some years with his brother at Venice, he determined upon settling in his native place. I do not know precisely when this took place, but it was certainly before 1527; for in the acts of the Council of Cadore

in that year, there is one *to solicit from the republic, in the name of the province of Cadore, the privilege of importing from Treviso a large quantity of grain, in favour of Francesco, son of Gregorio Vecelli, on condition that he distribute and sell it within the province.* Francesco had consequently returned previously to this; and for some time since he had already begun trade. And yet the picture of St Vitus, which Ridolfi affirms to have been the cause of Titian's jealousy, was not painted till 1528, which year is marked in large Roman letters on the canvas. That author adds, that to induce him to engage in trade, he obtained for him from King Ferdinand an exemption from many taxes, and the liberty of importing timber from the Tyrol, free of all duty; but this did not take place till 1550, when Francesco had been a merchant for almost thirty years. Titian used to say, when praising his brother to his friends, that he knew none who could compete with him but Francesco; but this can surely not be cited as an expression resulting from envy. After having thus refuted the calumnies against his brother, I will return to Francesco.

His business did not keep him so occupied as to take him entirely from painting; in which, on the contrary, for some years after

his settling at Cadore, he frequently exercised himself, not only in portraying his friends, but also in works of great importance: among which the best is the picture he did for the great altar of the church of St Vitus in Cadore, where it still is in excellent preservation, just as it came from the hand of this able painter. On a high stool, which has for a back a cloth of uncertain colour, the Virgin is seated in a dignified attitude. She is gently supporting with her right hand her son, who with a quick and lively motion, as becomes a child of a year old or so, throws his left arm round her neck, while with a sweet smile he is looking at St Vitus, a young warrior of a fine and elegant shape, presented to him by a priest kneeling at his feet. St John Baptist quite naked, except a small skin which is tied on one side a little below the waist, occupies the left of the picture; and behind him is seen a bishop pontifically habited. On the steps of the stool on which the Virgin sits, are seen some of the most beautiful boys that can possibly be imagined, occupied in preparing flowers and grass to offer to Jesus: while two cherubs are descending from heaven with garlands to crown their queen. Upon a light distant cloud the celestial dove diffuses its bright rays, to which some heads of cherubims, hardly

distinguished by the skilful artist, who wished to express great distance, form a crown. The predominant colour of the complexions inclines somewhat to brown, without however hurting the tender delicacy of the skin of the Virgin and boys. I shall say nothing of the faces, which are all varied, and so finished that they appear to be portraits; nor of the lamb at the foot of St John the Baptist, that turns to the Saint with a look at once lively, natural, and affectionate. The disposition of the figures is altogether Titianesque; and there is to be found that tranquil repose, that symmetry which forms, in my opinion, one of the distinguishing characteristics of that great master. But at the same time I must allow that this picture has a something harsh and abrupt, which does not allow its being confounded with his brother's works.

After this work, which was done in 1528, and when Francesco was already fifty-three, he painted a Girolamo for the church of St Christopher at Longarone, a large village in the Bellunese, which has been missing for some years; and there is no notice of it extant. I should here give an account of another picture by Francesco, but I do not know what to think of it, as it does not seem to agree with the other

circumstances in the life of our painter. I have been assured by a person worthy of the highest credit, and not unacquainted with the art, that in the palace of the Marquis Antaldi of Pesaro there exists the portrait of a Duke of Urbino by the hand of Francesco Vecelli, who wrote his name on the back: this was a very fine portrait, of the size of life, and in excellent preservation. He is dressed in black, with a cravat in the Spanish fashion; in his hand he holds the staff of Gonfalonier of Holy Church, and from his neck hangs an order attached to a chain of gold. Had he done the portrait of Francesco Maria before Titian? Or did he copy that done by his brother? But in 1532 Francesco was already settled in Cadore. I never saw this portrait, and do not venture to advance any conjecture.

Here ends the professional career of Francesco, who appears not to have relinquished the art altogether, till he applied himself wholly to trade; but Gregory, his father, being dead, to whom, from his great integrity and prudence, the management of public affairs had been entrusted, Francesco was not insensible to the honour of the charge which his fellow-citizens hastened to offer him; and rising by degrees from one thing to another to the principal

situation of the province, he found himself so occupied with the administration of public business that he was obliged to give up painting entirely.

There are no records by which we can learn whether he was married, had children, or lived single. There are, it is true, two letters from Peter Aretin to Giovanni Vecelli, nephew of Titian, and born in the happy land which produced that great man, but this might be the son of some sister of his, of whom no account remains; or of some other near relation, who according to the custom of the time was called nephew; as Mark Vecelli, son of Titian's first cousin, was called his nephew. I am inclined to think that he lived single, from this consideration, that in the funeral oration, which makes honourable mention of his generous hospitality towards strangers and his friends, of his social converse, of his liberality towards the poor, there is not a word about either wife or children; a very remarkable omission if he had had any.

The trade in timber which he carried on, and the affairs of his country frequently led him to Venice; as love for his native place and the salubrity of the air brought Titian every year to Cadore. This gave them an oppor-

tunity of being often together: so that as they had common kindred and property, so also their friends were in common; whence Sansovino, Aretin, and Marcolino, with all the other intimates of Titian, were also those of Francesco.

Beloved by all, and held in the highest esteem for his public and private virtues, Francesco happy and healthy attained an advanced old age. It is not known absolutely when he died, but certainly not before 1559, in which year he was syndic of the general Council of Cadore; nor after 1560; since in the catalogue of the councillors of the following year, his name is not registered as before.

The great benefits he had conferred on the province, the great quantity of money he had given to the poor, his integrity, his great experience in public affairs, the sweetness of his disposition, the amenity of his conversation, rendered him dear to every body and accounted their common father; and as such he received after his death from his grateful country the honours of a public funeral, and the truest testimony to the virtue of his life, the tears of all his fellow-citizens.

Francesco was in person very well made, and handsome in features; and in his old age

so dignified and venerable as to conciliate universal admiration. With the singular qualities of his person the gifts of his mind well accorded: for he possessed the greatest integrity, singular prudence, excellent judgment, and a good memory. Grave and dignified in public meetings, he used to season his private conversation with *atticisms* and agreeable jests: and both in public and private he always showed himself open and sincere. Liberal and splendid without ostentation he did no injury to any one himself, and soon forgot those of others. A brave soldier, a fine painter, a respected merchant, an excellent magistrate, he was an advantage and honour to his Prince, to his family, and to his countrymen.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

ACCOUNT OF HORATIO, THE YOUNGEST SON OF TITIAN.

Those have indeed reason to grieve, who having received from nature the requisites for becoming great men, are compelled to wrestle with poverty, which deprives them of, or renders very difficult to be obtained, the means of instruction; and on the other hand most blameable is the conduct of others who, possessed of genius, good health, fortune, and opportunity, allow themselves often when they have nearly arrived at the goal, to be led astray by the allurements of pleasure and ease. Of this last number was Horatio Vecelli, who, however good a painter he really was, might have become much greater, if his father's wealth

had not been an obstacle to his advancement. He was born at Venice, in the year 1515, when his father had already acquired the name of a very excellent painter, and had by his talents opened the path to honour and riches. In nothing was his excellent parent wanting to his education; and Horatio and his elder brother Pomponio answered for some time to their father's cares in such a manner as to make him hope every thing from them. But it was not long before Pomponio began to show himself averse to painting, and, by degrees, to every sort of useful application: wherefore Titian's whole attention was confined to Horatio, who, in a short time, gave proofs that he would not be much inferior to his master. The first works he did, when yet a youth, were some portraits, which were highly praised; and at the age of thirty, being at Rome with his father, he drew some of the Pope's courtiers, and a certain Battista Siciliano, a celebrated professor of the viol, which acquired him much reputation. Vasari says that the latter portrait was an excellent production, and Ridolfi affirms that many portraits done by Horatio could not be distinguished from those of his father. This took place in 1546; and the following year he

married in Venice: nothing is known respecting the condition or qualities of his wife. He had probably no children; for his property went, like that of his father, to Pomponio and their sister Cornelia. But if we have little to lament that only scattered accounts have reached us respecting the particulars of his private life, is it not an unfortunate thing that of the works of so distinguished an artist such little care was taken by those who collected notices of the Venetian painters of the best age? Perhaps, however, the fault of this should be ascribed to the circumstance of his having been all his life, from his infancy to his death, with his father, and having almost constantly worked under him: so that most of his works remained absorbed in the great reputation of his father. Still we know that having accompanied the latter in his two journeys to the Imperial Court of Vienna, he occupied himself totally separate from his father in doing the portraits of some very distinguished persons; which works were afterwards sold by the possessors as by Titian, in order to give them greater value. But his talents did not go unrewarded; for the Emperor, both to gratify Titian, whom he wished to draw into Spain, and to encourage Horatio to greater

things, granted him the naturalization of that kingdom, with the allowance of five hundred crowns per annum.

At the latter end of the year 1550, being returned to Venice with his father, he was by him chosen to do, in concert with Tintoret and Paul Veronese, one of the three histories which were wanting to complete the paintings of the hall of the Grand Council-Chamber. Here he painted the battle which took place near Rome, between the soldiers of the Emperor Frederic and the Roman populace, excited to mutiny by the insolence of the others; in this he drew an infinite number of figures, all (as the probability of the action permitted) with different standards, dresses, and arms: thus also are seen the ruins of ancient edifices, further off the walls and towers of modern Rome, and the Imperial tents pitched on the outside: all these things assist admirably in giving beauty to the history. Among the other capital groups there was one which was particularly admired of a horse held by a servant, the singular beauty of which made people suppose that Titian himself had put his hand to it. This work, which was the most important that Horatio ever did, perished with many other *chefs-d'œuvre* in the

conflagration of the Ducal palace: and nothing else so valuable remains of this painter, while an infinity of other pictures, which assure the reputation of those excellent artists, were preserved of Veronese and Tintoret. However, the knowledge that he was thought by his father capable of entering into competition with them, and that Horatio's performance was not held to be inferior to that of his rivals, is sufficient to make us reasonably infer that it was a very valuable work.

Seeing that, although he lived to more than seventy, he painted few other things, and those of little importance, we may suppose, and not perhaps unjustly, that the ease and wealth of his own house, and more than that the example of his father, who, after his fiftieth year lived in great splendour, made work displeasing to him. In this latter point if true, he certainly did not resemble his father, who, till near one hundred years old, never neglected his art, which he always loved most ardently. But Titian had known the mediocrity of fortune; wherefore the habitual application to labour contracted when young did not forsake him when old: while Horatio, from his early youth had been able to regard

the profits of the art as not at all necessary to living well, and to neglect the labour which took him many hours in the day from his pleasures and friends. I do not, however, mean to have it understood that Horatio altogether gave up the art in the latter part of his life; but rather that being obliged, as I have before observed, to assist his father in finishing the numerous works ordered by Philip the Second and others, he did not care to busy himself after a certain period in any separate work.

He did, however, a few valuable things in some churches at Venice; and some Cartoons for the mosaic-work in St Mark's; and also various portraits which are now reckoned among his father's works. That he afterwards allowed himself to be overcome by the allurements of alchemy, which about that time proved the ruin of so many imprudent people and the gain of a few impostors, I shall neither affirm nor deny, not knowing on what Ridolfi grounds his assertion: but that by alchemy he reduced to smoke much of the gold acquired by his father, is what appears to me altogether unlikely, both because he did not survive him; and because after his death, in

his house were found effects of an immense value, in jewels, gold, pictures, policies of insurance, &c., as I have shown in the life of Titian, with whom his son shared one common fate.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

FROM ANNIBAL CARACCI TO LOUIS CARACCI.

Parma, 28th April 1580.

When Agostino comes, he will be welcome; we shall live in peace, we shall busy ourselves in copying those fine things, but I hope for God's sake, without any dispute, without so many subtilties and so many words. Let us apply all our attention to catching, as well as we can, the fine manner of Correggio; that is our principal affair, so as one day to be able to mortify all that bonnetted *canaille* which is always attacking us as if we were assassins. . . . . The opportunities which Agostino wished for are not to be found: this country, which one would not suppose to be so devoid of good taste, appears to me to have no pleasures or resources for a painter. All the people think of is making love out of doors, and eating and drinking within.

I promised, Sir, on my departure, to give you my opinion on every thing I should see. But the fact is,

that I find it impossible, so confused are my ideas. I am become quite foolish; I weep and experience the most cruel vexation when left to myself. I think of the misfortunes of poor Correggio. So great a man—if indeed he was one, and not rather an angel on earth—to lose himself, to waste away in a country where he was not known! That Correggio, who ought to have been lifted to the skies, should die here in so miserable a manner! O Correggio! O Titian! I shall always cherish you! And till I go to Venice, and see thy works there, oh Titian! I shall not die happy. Let people say what they will, those are the true painters: I now see it, and acknowledge the justness of what you said about it. But still I don't quite understand it, so do not altogether admit it as yet. That purity and simplicity which are so true without being obvious, please me much. It is nature, artless and unconstrained. Such is Raphael. Let every body take it according to his own feelings: that is what I do; and though I can't well explain myself, I know what I'm about, and that is enough.

The great Corporal has been to see me twice, and he would take me to his house to show me your beautiful St Margaret and St Dorothea. By God, those are beautiful half-figures! I asked him what he had done with your two other pictures, and he said he had sold them very advantageously. He says he will take all the heads I shall do after the cupola of Correggio, and also any others from pictures by the same artist. He will introduce me to private houses, if I wish to share that advantage with him. I told him I would do every thing

he wished; for, take him all in all, he is a very good sort of man, with a good heart. He also much wished to make me a little present, which I contented myself with praising, without accepting it; but this did not do, for when I got home, I found he had sent it and left it in my chamber. What am I to do with it, since it does not belong to me? He will also give me a black suit for the town, on account for the fine pictures I am to do. I was forced to tell him again that I would take and do every thing he pleased, since we have obligations to him.

I have not received any answer from my father: I can't imagine why. I fear his letter has been mislaid, for Agostino tells me that my father answered me the same day. I returned to see the cupola and church of the Zoccolanti, and I there observed what you have sometimes remarked, and found you correct: but I must still say, that to my taste Parmegiano has nothing in common with Correggio, because the pictures of this great artist emanate from his own idea and understanding; one can see that it is all drawn from his own invention. He belongs entirely to himself; he alone is original, whereas others all rely upon something which does not belong to them, this upon the model, that on statues, the other on prints. In short, other people's thoughts are represented such as they *might* be, and Correggio's such as they really are. I can't well explain myself, but I understand thoroughly what I mean.

Agostino will be able to extract its quintessence, and to speak of it in his fashion. I intreat you, Sir, to press him to come and put an end to his two engravings:

remind him in a mild manner what service he thus renders our father; I cannot do less than tell you it, but I shall say no more to him on the subject. As soon as I touch any money, which I am in hopes of, I will either send it or bring it myself. But I fear I tire you.

I remain, Sir, &c.

Annibal Caracci.

No. II.

CONCERNING TITIAN'S HOUSE.

The houses in which men of great genius are born or live, *which will never be without fame till the universe dissolves*,* and are, if I may say so, mute witnesses of their most secret thoughts, have been always held in the highest veneration in all ages and by almost all nations. Pausanias, in his account of Beotia, relates, that having passed the river Dirces, he saw the house of Pindar still in existence; and here every year the neighbouring people came to celebrate festivals and sacrifices. To the same cause the Thebans owed their preservation, when Alexander, greatly enraged with them, had already deliberated upon burning their city, but the fear that Pindar's house might be still in existence, and become a prey to the flames, restrained him. This sentiment of religious respect is so natural to men, that in our own time there is no sensible foreigner, who passes through Ferrara, or Padua, without paying a visit to the house in which Ariosto lived and died, and where he composed great part of his divine poem; or without going to Arqua to offer his respects to the dwelling and tomb of the Aretine swan. I flatter myself, therefore, that it will not be displeasing to the lovers of Titian's

* Petrarch.

memory, if I present them with the following passage of a letter written by the most learned doctor Taddeo Jacopi of Cadore; a gentleman who having with much expense and trouble made a rich collection of original documents respecting the history of his native place, imparted them to studious men and his friends in general with unexampled liberality. The passage is as follows: "As to the identity of the house in which Titian was born, I cannot assert any thing positively; but having found in the notary deeds of the late Faustus Vecelli, resident notary of this country, the instrument of sale of a house situated in the street called Lovera, near the place called Arsenale; I will presume that it might have belonged to Gregory Vecelli, Titian's father, and hence that the latter may have been born there. As moreover this house was bounded on the east by the Arsenale, and on the west by a spacious court-yard, which are at present the very boundaries of a house which was shown me when I was there, I think that it is possible to reconcile the assertion of the anonymous author of a life of Titian, that Titian and his father lived in the street called Arsenale, since this house, though according to the above-mentioned deed it was situated in the Lovera street, yet had one front in the Arsenale. I send herewith the said instrument,* from which it will

* Extract of an instrument of sale and purchase in the Notary's Protocol, marked No. 6, of the late Faustus Vecelli, &c. dated 17th December 1580.

"Signor Taddeo, son of the late Michele de Jacopi, and Signor Daniele, son of Pietro Ciani, chosen by Signor Giovanni, son of the late Cristofero de Lesco di San Pietro, purchaser, on the one

be seen that part of the old house was inhabited by the heirs of the late Count Vecelli, another descendant of that Count who was Titian's ancestor, and another part of it by his cousin Titus."

hand; and Signor Celso Sanfior de Serravalle, acting for the Reverend Pomponio, son of the late most excellent Signor Titian, painter, by a power of attorney executed in Venice, seller, on the other hand; certify to the having paid the value of a house situated in the parish, in the street called Lovera, with a court-yard behind it, looking towards the west, 23 feet by 11, bounded on the east by the place called Arsenale; on the south, as the purchaser pleases; on the west ditto, partly however by the *brolo* of Signor Tito Vecelli; on the north by Osvalda's, and G. brother of Monego; the value of it is 1745 livres, 4." . . . [*the rest is wanting.*]

No. III.

LETTER OF TITIAN TO BOLLANI, BISHOP OF BRESCIA.

TO BOLLANI, BISHOP OF BRESCIA.

It being now a long time since I paid my respects to your Lordship, I will now by this letter make up my deficiency, and at the same time intreat your Lordship's favour in the matter now pending between myself and your magnificent city; and that your Lordship may know in what situation I am thereby placed, I will inform you, that my son Horatio having carried the pictures done by me not without much inconvenience, to oblige these gentlemen, he received for answer, that although it appeared to them that they were not by my hand, yet they would take care I should be satisfied, and so gave me an order for a sum of money which they thought would be sufficient for my whole payment. Then the said Horatio, who saw the small knowledge they evinced of my works, and the prejudice it would be to me, both as to money and reputation, would not accept their offer. But as I wish to see the end of it, and go through with it by means of law, since nothing else will do, I have resolved previously to try whether, by means of your Lordship, I cannot come to some fair terms with them, so that I may not appear too strict, and still continue friends with them; it not being my custom or inclination to go to law, unless I am com-

pelled. Therefore I intreat you by the love your great courtesy bears me, and by my ancient service and devotion towards you, that you will interfere in this affair, that we may come to some fair agreement, and I remain their Lordship's servant, as I had begun to be for the love of some of my patrons, by whose means I was entrusted with this work, and on the reputation of their liberality, putting off some works I had to do for my King and many lords of this city. The reason why they would wish to withhold that which appears to me sufficient is, that I am contented to take whatever the work may be judged worth: and that for which I do not intend to submit to this loss is, that the thing ought to be judged by persons skilled in the art, that is, by painters, and those excellent ones, although I was satisfied that the judgment of those two doctors named in the writing should take something from the amount of the remuneration allotted me by the decision of masters of the art, who were to have given their information both as to its being the work of my hand, and its value, far from any suspicion of fraud and malignity, as sincere persons, and chosen for this matter by both parties; for if this is not done, though an Aristotle were called upon to give judgment, he would not be capable of judging either of the difference of manner, or the difficulty of the art. Therefore let the judgment be entrusted to men excellent in the art of painting, and if these pictures shall by them be thought not the work of my hand, and that I do not deserve a greater reward than those gentlemen seem willing to give me, so far from asking them any more, I will be contented to

return them all the money I have already received. And since they will not accept these offers of mine, in order not to burthen my labours with any weight of conscience, I offer to remit them a hundred crowns of what skilful persons shall judge I have deserved; provided that that judgment be made by honest persons. Certainly this is not what I expected from their large promises, which gave me such a great idea of their liberality; and besides, when they had made me do one of these pictures according to my own taste, they afterwards made me do it over again according to theirs, without any consideration for the loss of time and money incurred thereby; besides the expense of the journey, and my going to Brescia the first time, and sending Horatio afterwards, in the middle of winter, to carry these pictures, in consequence of the trouble caused to me by their quarrelsome protests. Therefore I again intreat their Lordships to condescend to do justice by me, that my honour may not be touched, and that the good opinion which I have always had of the liberality of their city may be established; for as I profess to be a reasonable person, I shall always be satisfied with what is just and proper, conducting this business in a friendly manner: but if it must be otherwise, I shall proceed, though against my will, to go through with it by legal means, and shall always lament their obstinacy. I have nothing else, &c.

Venice, June 3rd, 1569.

This affair was afterwards accommodated by the payment of the sum of a thousand golden ducats.

No. IV.

"TO SIGNOR VENDRAMO, CHAMBERLAIN OF THE CARDINAL HIPPOLITO DE' MEDICIS.

"MOST HONOURED SIGNOR VENDRAMO,

"YOUR love to me induces you to tell me my fault, and you do so, because it redounds to my ruin and shame to neglect the friends and patrons who are dear to me, particularly the most illustrious and reverend Signor de' Medicis: but the great respect I bear him, makes me unwilling and afraid to address myself to him personally, after having failed in performing the promise I made to his Lordship of coming to visit him at Rome. But, encouraged by what you said in your last letter, I entreat you, by the love you have for me, and your inclination to do me good, to commend me to him, in that elegant manner you are such master of, and to tell him that there is no prince who possesses so large a share of my adoration, or whom I am so eager to serve, as his illustrious Lordship. And although I am not in the presence of his Excellency, yet I am busied in doing some pictures for him, as he will shortly find. To convince him of this, let him know, that a day or two since, I was about to send him the picture of a Lady, which I am confident would have been, and still will be, most pleasing to him. While putting it up, the reverend Cardinal of Lorraine

came to pay me a visit; and, following the example of the illustrious Medicis, had his portrait taken by me: he, seeing this picture, was so pleased with it, that he wished by all means to have it; however, on my informing him that it was the property of the illustrious de' Medicis, he no longer insisted on it, but still intreated me to do him a duplicate of it before I should transmit it to its owner, adding that he was an intimate friend of Signor de' Medicis. If I had thought it would have gratified his Excellency, I should have given the Cardinal of Lorraine the picture at once, but it is as well to oblige both, so I will set about copying it immediately, and send it off as soon as done, which will be a proof of my eagerness to serve them. And although I am at Venice, yet my art and hand are at his Lordship's command; indeed if I did not think I should one day or other have it in my power to gratify his Excellency, I should go mad. I wish I could kiss his hands; but however, you will do that for me in my name, telling that I never cease to praise him and his greatness, in which I am joined by Signor Pietro Aretino, who indeed says that of his Lordship which might be said of Christ.

"Pomponio and Horatio, my sons, are well, and attending to their studies: they are grown quite tall, and will, I trust, become great men by the favour of God and my patrons.

"Venice, 20th December 1534."

No. V.

"TO CARDINAL ALEXANDER FARNESE.

"My Most Illustrious and Reverend Lord and Patron,

"It being some time since I paid my respects to your illustrious and reverend Lordship, I now do so by this letter, which is to inform you, that by the grace of our Lord God I am well and happy, at your service; so I intreat you would condescend to give me some orders, that my life may end in your service, as has always been my wish since I became the devoted servant of the house of Farnese. This I earnestly intreat you, and also that you would deign to commend me to his Holiness, and to the illustrious Lord Cardinal Alessandrino; who on receiving from me many months since a picture of St. Catherine, ordered in his name by the Lord Nuncio, who is here in Venice, offered in his courtesy to do me any favour I might ask, besides promising to send me some great gift or other, which I have not as yet seen. Induced by these most courteous offers, I ventured to intreat his Lordship to assist me in this, that I should feel much pleasure in having some small pension on the benefices enjoyed in Spain by my son Pomponio, who had been naturalized in that country by the Emperor Charles the Fifth of glorious memory: his

illustrious Lordship replied, that I should shortly obtain this and greater favours. But having waited a long time without receiving any benefit from this quarter, I have determined upon intreating your illustrious and reverend Lordship to condescend to use your interest in my behalf with his Lordship, that the great authority of my Lord Farnese may give the spur to the courteous wishes of the Lord Alessandrino, and that I may be enabled by your means to receive some consolation in the matter before I depart this life. If I ever do obtain it, I shall consider that I owe all the obligation to your illustrious and reverend Lordship; and if I can offer you no other recompense, I shall at least keep it always in grateful recollection. Again offering you most respectfully my services, I kiss your illustrious hands.

"Your illustrious and reverend Lordship's

"Most devoted servant,

"TITIAN VECELLI.

"Venice, 5th December 1568."

Addressed, "To the very Illustrious and Reverend Lord, my most Honoured Patron, Signor Cardinal Farnese."

No. VI.

CRITICISM ON THE PICTURES OF TITIAN AT THE MARQUESS OF STAFFORD'S.

From these we turn to the Four Ages, by Titian, or Giorgione, as some say. Strange that there should have lived two men in the same age, on the same spot of earth, with respect to whom it should bear a question, which of them painted such a picture! Barry, we remember, and Collins, the miniature-painter, thought it a Giorgione, and they were considered two of the best judges *going*, at the time this picture was exhibited, among others, in the Orleans Gallery. We cannot pretend to decide on such matters *ex cathedrâ;* but no painter need be ashamed to own it. The gradations of human life are marked with characteristic felicity, and the landscape, which is thrown in, adds a pastoral charm and naïveté to the whole. To live or to die in such a chosen, still retreat, must be happy! Certainly, this composition suggests a beautiful moral lesson; and as to the painting of the group of children in the corner, we suppose, for careless freedom of pencil, and a certain milky softness of the flesh, it can scarcely be paralleled.

The story and figures of the preceding composition by Annibal Carracci, are more classical and better managed than those of the Diana and Calisto by Titian;

but there is a charm in that picture and the companion to it, the Diana and Actæon, which no words can convey. It is the charm thrown over each by the greatest genius for colouring that the world ever saw. It is difficult, nay impossible, to say which is the finest in this respect: but either one or the other (whichever we turn to, and we can never be satisfied with looking at either, so rich a scene do they unfold, so serene a harmony do they infuse into the soul) is like a divine piece of music, or rises "like an exhalation of rich distilled perfumes." In the figures, in the landscape, in the water, in the sky, there are tones, colours, scattered with a profuse and unerring hand, gorgeous, but most true, dazzling with their force, but blended, softened, woven together into a woof like that of Iris—tints of flesh colour, as if you saw the blood circling beneath the pearly skin; clouds empurpled with setting suns; hills steeped in azure skies; trees turning to a mellow brown; the cold grey rocks, and the water so translucent, that you see the shadows and the snowy feet of the naked nymphs in it. With all this prodigality of genius, there is the greatest severity and discipline of art. The figures seem grouped for the effect of colour—the most striking contrasts are struck out, and then a third object, a piece of drapery, an uplifted arm, a bow and arrows, a straggling weed, is introduced to make an intermediate tint, or carry on the harmony. Every colour is melted, *impasted* into every other, with fine keeping and bold diversity. Look at that indignant, queen-like figure of Diana (more perhaps like an offended mortal princess than an immortal goddess, though the immortals could

frown and give themselves strange airs) and see the snowy, ermine-like skin; the pale, clear shadows of the delicately formed back; then the brown colour of the slender trees behind to set off the shaded flesh; and last, the dark figure of the Ethiopian girl behind, completing the gradation. Then the bright scarf suspended in the air connects itself with the glowing clouds, and deepens the solemn azure of the sky; Actæon's bow and arrows fallen on the ground are also red; and there is a little flower on the brink of the bath which catches and pleases the eye, saturated with this colour. The yellowish grey of the earth purifies the low tone of the figures where they are in half-shadow; and this again is enlivened by the leaden-coloured fountain of the bath, which is set off (or kept down in its proper place) by the blue vestments strewn near it. The figure of Actæon is spirited and natural; it is that of a bold, rough hunter in the early ages, struck with surprise, abashed with beauty. The forms of some of the female figures are elegant enough, particularly that of Diana in the story of Calisto; and there is a very pretty-faced girl mischievously dragging the culprit forward; but it is the texture of the flesh that is throughout delicious, unrivalled, surpassingly fair. The landscape canopies the living scene with a sort of proud, disdainful consciousness. The trees nod to it, and the hills roll at a distance in a sea of colour. Everywhere tone, not form, predominates—there is not a distinct line in the picture,—but a gusto, a rich taste of colour is left upon the eye as if it were the palate, and the diapason of picturesque harmony is full to overflowing. "Oh Titian and Nature! which of you copied the other?"

We are ashamed of this description now that we have made it, and heartily wish somebody would make a better. There is another Titian here (which was also in the Orleans Gallery) Venus rising from the Sea. The figure and face are gracefully designed and sweetly expressed:—whether it is the picture of the Goddess of Love, may admit of a question; that it is the picture of a lovely woman in a lovely attitude, admits of none. The half-shadow in which most of it is painted, is a kind of veil through which the delicate skin shows more transparent and aerial. There is nothing in the picture but this single exquisitely turned figure, and if it were continued downward to a whole length, it would seem like a copy of a statue of the goddess carved in ivory or marble; but being only a half-length it has not this effect at all, but looks like an enchanting study, or a part of a larger composition, selected *à l'enores.* The hair, and the arm holding it up, are nearly the same as in the well-known picture of Titian's Mistress, and as delicious. The back-ground is beautifully painted. We said before, that there was no object in the picture detached from the principal figure. Nay, there is the sea, and a sea-shell, but these might be given in sculpture.

PICTURE BY TITIAN AT WINDSOR CASTLE.

In the same room with the Misers by the blacksmith of Antwerp, Quintin Matsys, is a very different picture by Titian, consisting of two figures also, *viz.* himself and a Venetian Senator. It is one of the finest specimens of this master. His own portrait is not much: it

has spirit, but is hard, with somewhat of a vulgar, knowing look. But the head of the Senator is as fine as anything that ever proceeded from the hand of man. The expression is a lambent flame, a soul of fire dimmed, not quenched by age. The flesh *is* flesh. If Rubens's pencil fed upon roses, Titian's was *carnivorous*. The tone is betwixt a gold and silver hue. The texture and pencilling are marrowy. The dress is a rich crimson, which seems to have been growing deeper ever since it was painted. It is a front view. As far as attitude or action is concerned, it is mere still-life: but the look is of that kind that goes through you at a single glance. Let any one look well at this portrait, and if he then sees nothing in it, or in the portraits of this painter in general, let him give up *virtù* and criticism in despair.—*Picture Galleries of England.*

No. VII.

CHARACTER OF TITIAN'S PORTRAITS.

THERE is a common cant of criticism which makes Titian merely a colourist. What he really wanted was invention: he had expression in the highest degree. I declare I have seen heads of his with more meaning in them than any of Raphael's. But he fell short of Raphael in this, that (except in one or two instances) he could not heighten and adapt the expresssion that he saw to different and more striking circumstances. He gave more of what he saw than any other painter that ever lived; and in the imitative part of his art had a more universal genius than Raphael had in composition and invention. Beyond the actual and habitual look of nature, however, "the demon that he served" deserted him, or became a very tame one. Vandyke gave more of the general air and manners of fashionable life than of individual character; and the subjects that he treated are neither remarkable for intellect nor passion. They are people of polished manners and placid constitutions; and many of the very best of them are "stupidly good." Titian's portraits, on the other hand, frequently present a much more formidable than inviting appearance. You would hardly trust yourself in a room with them. You do not bestow a cold, leisurely approbation on them, but look to see what they may be thinking of you, not

without some apprehension for the result. They have not the same smooth clear skins or the even pulse that Vandyke's seem to possess. They are, for the most part, fierce, wary, voluptuous, subtle, haughty. Raphael painted Italian faces as well as Titian; but he threw into them a character of intellect rather than of temperament. In Titian the irritability takes the lead, sharpens and gives direction to the understanding. There seems to be a personal controversy between the spectator and the individual whose portrait he contemplates, which shall be master of the other. I may refer to two portraits in the Louvre, the one by Raphael, the other by Titian, (Nos. 1153 and 1210), in illustration of these remarks. I do not know two finer or more characteristic specimens of these masters, each in its way. The one is of a Student dressed in black, absorbed in thought, intent on some problem, with the hands crossed, and leaning on a table for support, as it were to give freer scope to the labour of the brain, and though the eyes are directed towards you, it is with evident absence of mind. Not so the other portrait, No. 1210. All its faculties are collected to see what it can make of you, as if you had intruded upon it with some hostile design; it takes a defensive attitude, and shews as much vigilance as dignity. It draws itself up, as much as if to say, "Well, what do you think of me?" and exercises a discretionary power over you. It has "an eye to threaten and command," not to be lost in idle thought, or in ruminating over some abstruse, speculative proposition. It is this intense personal character which, I think, gives the superiority to Titian's portraits over all others, and

stamps them with a living and permanent interest. Of other pictures you tire, if you have them constantly before you; of his, never. For other pictures have either an abstracted look, and you dismiss them, when you have made up your mind on the subject as a matter of criticism; or an heroic look, and you cannot be always straining your enthusiasm; or an insipid look, and you sicken of it. But whenever you turn to look at Titian's portraits, they appear to be looking at you; there seems to be some question pending between you, as though an intimate friend or inveterate foe were in the room with you; they exert a kind of fascinating power; and there is that exact resemblance of individual nature which is always new and always interesting, because you cannot carry away a mental abstraction of it, and you must recur to the object, to revive it in its full force and integrity. I would as soon have Raphael's or most other pictures hanging up in a collection, that I might pay an occasional visit to them: Titian's are the only ones that I should wish to have hanging up in the same room with me for company!

Titian, in his portraits, seems to have understood the principle of historical design better than anybody. Every part tells, and has a bearing on the whole. There is no one who has such simplicity and repose,—no violence, no affectation, no attempt at forcing an effect; insomuch that, by the uninitiated, he is often condemned as unmeaning and insipid. A turn of the eye, a compression of the lip, decides the point. He just draws the face out of its most ordinary state, and gives it the direction he would have it take; but then every part takes the same

direction, and the effect of this united impression (which is absolutely momentary and all but habitual) is wonderful. It is that which makes his portraits the most natural and the most striking in the world. It may be compared to the effect of a number of small loadstones, that by acting together lift the greatest weights. Titian seized upon the lines of character in the most original and connected point of view. Thus in his celebrated portrait of Hippolito de' Medici, there is a keen, sharpened expression that strikes you, like a blow from the spear that he holds in his hand. The look goes through you; yet it has no frown, no startling gesticulation, no affected penetration. It is quiet, simple, yet it almost withers you. The whole face and every separate feature is cast in the same acute or wedge-like form. The forehead is high and narrow, the eyebrows raised and coming to a point in the middle, the nose straight and peaked, the mouth contracted and drawn up at the corners, the chin acute, and the two sides of the face slanting to a point. The number of acute angles which the lines of the face form, are, in fact, a net entangling the attention and subduing the will. The effect is felt at once, though it asks time and consideration to understand the cause. It is a face which you would beware of rousing into anger or hostility, as you would beware of setting in motion some complicated and dangerous machinery. The possessor of it, you may be sure, is no trifler. Such indeed was the character of the man. This is to paint true portrait and true history. So, if our artist painted a mild and thoughtful expression, all the lines of the countenance were softened and relaxed. If

the mouth was going to speak, the whole face was going to speak. It was the same in colour. The gradations are infinite, and yet so blended as to be imperceptible. No two tints are the same, though they produce the greatest harmony and simplicity of tone, like flesh itself. "If," said a person, pointing to the shaded side of a portrait of Titian, "you could turn this round to the light, you would find it would be of the same colour as the other side!" In short, there is manifest in his portraits a greater tenaciousness and identity of impression than in those of any other painter. Form, colour, feeling, character, seemed to adhere to his eye, and to become part of himself; and his pictures, on this account, "leave stings" in the minds of the spectators! There is, I grant, the same personal appeal, the same point-blank look in some of Raphael's portraits (see those of a Princess of Arragon and of Count Castiglione, No. 1150 and 1151) as in Titian, but they want the texture of the skin and the minute individual details to stamp them with the same reality. And again, as to the uniformity of outline in the features, this principle has been acted upon and carried to excess by Kneller and other artists. The eyes, the eye-brows, the nose, the mouth, the chin, are rounded off as if they were turned in a lathe, or as a peruke-maker arranges the ends of a wig. In them it is vile and mechanical, without any deference to truth of character or of nature; and instead of being pregnant with meaning and originality of expression, produces only insipidity and monotony." —*Plain Speaker*, vol. ii, p. 217.

Goodness of disposition, with a clear complexion

and handsome features, is the chief ingredient in English beauty. There is a great difference in this respect between Vandyke's portraits of women and Titian's, of which we may find examples in the Louvre. The picture, which goes by the name of his Mistress, is one of the most celebrated of the latter. The neck of this picture is like a broad crystal mirror; and the hair which she holds so carelessly in her hand is like meshes of beaten gold. The eyes which roll in their ample sockets, like two shining orbs, and which are turned away from the spectator, only dart their glances more powerfully into the soul; and the whole picture is a paragon of frank, cordial grace, and transparent brilliancy of colouring. Her tight boddice compresses her full but finely-proportioned waist; while the tucker in part conceals and almost clasps the snowy bosom. But you never think of anything beyond the personal attractions, and a certain sparkling intelligence. She is not marble, but a fine piece of animated clay. There is none of that retired and shrinking character, that modesty of demeanour, that sensitive delicacy, that starts even at the shadow of evil—that are to be traced in the portrait by Vandyke. Still there is no positive vice, no meanness, no hypocrisy, but an unconstrained elastic spirit of self-enjoyment, more bent on the end than scrupulous about the means; with firmly braced nerves, and a tincture of vulgarity. She is not like an English lady, nor like a lady at all; but she is a very fine servant-girl, conscious of her advantages, and willing to make the most of them. In fact, Titian's Mistress answers exactly, I conceive, to the idea conveyed by the English word, *Sweetheart.*

The Marchioness of Guasto is a fairer comparison. She is by the supposition a lady, but still an Italian one. There is a honeyed richness about the texture of the skin, and her air is languid from a sense of pleasure. The dress, though modest, has the marks of studied coquetry about it; it touches the very limits which it dares not pass; and her eyes, which are bashful and downcast, do not seem to droop under the fear of observation, but to retire from the gaze of kindled admiration,

—— "As if they thrill'd
Frail hearts, yet quenched not."

One might say, with Othello, of the hand with which she holds the globe that is offered to her acceptance,—

"This hand of yours requires,
A sequester from liberty, fasting and pray'r.
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here's a young and *melting* devil here,
That commonly rebels."

The hands of Vandyke's portraits have the purity and coldness of marble. The colour of the face is such as might be breathed upon it by the refreshing breeze; that of the Marchioness of Guasto's is like the glow it might imbibe from a golden sun-set. The expression in the English lady springs from her duties and her affections; that of the Italian countess inclines more to her ease and pleasures. The Marchioness of Guasto was one of three sisters, to whom, it is said, the inhabitants of Pisa proposed to pay divine honours, in the

manner that beauty was worshipped by the fabulous enthusiasts of old. Her husband seems to have participated in the common infatuation, from the fanciful homage that is paid to her in this allegorical composition; and if she was at all intoxicated by the incense offered to her vanity, the painter must be allowed to have qualified the expression of it "very craftily."—*Plain Speaker*, vol. ii.

No. VIII.

AN ENQUIRY WHETHER THE FINE ARTS ARE PROMOTED BY ACADEMIES AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. BY WILLIAM HAZLITT.

"It was ever the trick of our English nation, if they had a good thing, to make it too common."

THERE are three ways in which academies or public institutions might be supposed to promote the fine arts; either by furnishing the best models to the student, or by holding out immediate emolument and patronage, or by improving the public taste. I shall consider each of these in order.

First, a constant reference to the best models of art necessarily tends to enervate the mind, to intercept our view of nature, and to distract the attention by a variety of unattainable excellence. An intimate acquaintance with the works of the celebrated masters, may, indeed, add to the indolent refinements of taste, but will never produce one work of original genius,—one great artist. In proof of the general truth of this observation, I might

cite the works of Carlo Maratti, of Raphael Mengs, or of any of the effeminate school of critics and copyists, who have attempted to blend the borrowed beauties of others in a perfect whole. What do they contain but a negation of every excellence which they pretend to combine? Inoffensive insipidity is the utmost that can ever be expected, because it is the utmost that ever was attained, from the desire to produce a balance of good qualities, and to animate lifeless compositions by the transfusion of a spirit of originality. The thoughtless imitator, in his attempts to grasp all, loses his hold of that which was placed within his reach, and from aspiring at universal excellence, sinks into uniform mediocrity.* Besides, the student who has models of every kind of excellence constantly before him, is not only diverted from that particular walk of art in which, by patient exertion, he might have obtained ultimate success, but from having his imagination habitually raised to an overstrained standard of refinement, by the sight

* There is a certain pedantry, a given division of labour, an almost exclusive attention to some one object, which is necessary in Art, as in all the works of man. Without this, the unavoidable consequence is a gradual dissipation and prostitution of intellect, which leaves the mind without energy to devote to any pursuit the pains necessary to excel in it, and suspends every purpose in irritable imbecility. But the modern painter is bound not only to run the circle of his own art, but of all others. He must be "statesman, chemist, fiddler, and buffoon." He must have too many accomplishments to excel in his profession. When every one is bound to know everything, there is no time to do anything.

of the most exquisite examples of the art, becomes impatient and dissatisfied with his own attempts, wishes to reach the same perfection all at once, or throws down his pencil in despair. Thus the young enthusiast, whose genius and energy were to rival the great masters of antiquity, or create a new era in the art itself, baffled in his first sanguine expectations, reposes in indolence on what others have done;—wonders how such perfection should have been achieved, grows familiar with the minutest peculiarities of the different masters, flutters between the colouring of Rubens and the grace of Raphael, finds it easier to copy pictures than to paint them, and easier to *see* than to copy them, takes infinite pains to gain admission to all the great collections, lounges from one auction-room to another, and writes newspaper criticisms on the Fine Arts.—Such was not Correggio; he saw and felt for himself; he was of no school, but had his own world of art to create. That image of truth and beauty, which existed in his mind, he was forced to construct for himself, without rules or models. As it could only have arisen in his mind from the contemplation of nature, so he could only hope to embody it to others, by the imitation of nature. I can conceive the work growing under his hands,—by slow and patient touches approaching nearer to perfection, softened into finer grace, gaining strength from delicacy, and at last reflecting the pure image of nature on the canvass. Such is always the true progress of art: such are the necessary means by which the greatest works of every kind have been produced. They have been the

effect of power gathering strength from exercise, and warmth from its own impulse—stimulated to fresh efforts by conscious success, and by the surprise and strangeness of a new world of beauty, opening to the delighted imagination. The triumphs of art were victories over the difficulties of art; the prodigies of genius, the result of that strength which had grappled with nature. Titian copied even a plant, or a piece of common drapery, from the objects themselves; and Raphael is known to have made elaborate studies of the principal heads in his pictures. All the great painters of this period were thoroughly grounded in the first principles of their art; had learned to copy a head, a hand, or an eye, and had acquired patience to finish a single figure, before they undertook to paint extensive compositions. They knew that though Fame is represented with her head above the clouds, her feet rest upon the earth. Genius can only have its full scope where, though much may have been done, more remains to be done; where models exist chiefly to show the deficiences of art, and where the perfect idea is left to be filled up in the painter's imagination. Where the stimulus of novelty and of necessary exertion is wanting, generations repose on what has been done for them by their predecessors, as individuals, after a certain period, rest satisfied with the knowledge they have already acquired.

To proceed to the supposed advantages to be derived, in a pecuniary point of view, from the public patronage of the arts. It in this respect unfortunately defeats itself; for it multiplies its objects faster than it can

satisfy their claims, and raises up a swarm of competitors for the prize of genius from the dregs of idleness and dullness. The real patron is anxious to reward merit, not to encourage gratuitous pretenders to it—to see that the man of genius *takes no detriment;* that another Wilson is not left to perish for want:—not to propagate the breed, for that he knows to be impossible. But there are some persons who think it as essential to the interests of art, to keep up "an aerie of children,"—the young fry of embryo candidates for fame,—as others think it essential to the welfare of the kingdom to preserve the spawn of the herring fisheries. In general, public, that is, indiscriminate patronage, is, and can be nothing better than a species of intellectual seduction, by administering provocatives to vanity and avarice—it is leading astray the youth of this nation by fallacious hopes, which can scarcely ever be realized; it is beating up for raw dependents, sending out into the highways for the halt, the lame, and the blind, and making a scramble among a set of idle boys for prizes of the first, second, and third class, like those we make among children for gingerbread toys. True patronage does not consist in ostentatious professions of high keeping, and promiscuous intercourse with the arts. At the same time, the good that might be done by private taste and benevolence, is in a great measure prevented. The moment that a few individuals of taste and liberal spirit become members of a public body, they are no longer anything more than parts of a machine, which is usually wielded at will by some overbearing, officious intruder;

their good sense and good-nature are lost in a mass of ignorance and presumption, their names only serve to reflect credit on proceedings in which they have no share, and which are determined upon by a majority of persons who have no interest in the arts but what arises from the importance attached to them by regular organization, and no opinions but what are dictated to them by some self-constituted judge. Whenever vanity and self-importance are (as in general they must be) the governing principles of systems of public patronage, there is an end at once of all candour and directness of conduct. Their decisions are before the public: and the individuals who take the lead in these decisions are responsible for them. They have therefore to manage the public opinion, in order to secure that of their own body. Hence, instead of giving a firm, manly, and independent tone to that opinion, it is their business to watch all its caprices, and follow it in every casual turning. They dare not give their sanction to sterling merit, struggling with difficulties, but take every advantage of its success to reflect credit on their own reputation for sagacity. Their taste is a servile dependent on their vanity, and their patronage has an air of pauperism about it. They neglect or treat with insult the favourite whom they suspect of having fallen off in the opinion of the public; but if he is able to recover his ground without their assistance, are ready to heap their mercenary bounties upon those of others,—greet him with friendly congratulations, and share his triumph with him.

Perhaps the only public patronage which was ever

really useful to the arts, or worthy of them, was that which they received first in Greece, and then in Italy, from the religious institutions of the country; when the artist felt himself, as it were, a servant, at the altar, when his hand gave a visible form to gods or angels, heroes or apostles; and when the enthusiasm of genius was exalted by mingling with the flame of national devotion. The artist was not here degraded by being made the dependent on the caprice of wealth or fashion, but felt himself at once a public benefactor. He had to embody, by the highest effort of his art, subjects which were sacred to the imagination and feelings of the spectators: there was a common link, a mutual sympathy, between them, in their common faith.*—Every other mode of patronage but that which arises either from the general institutions of the country, or from the real unaffected taste of individuals, must, we conceive, be illegitimate, corrupted in its source, and either ineffectual or prejudicial

* Of the effect of *the authority* of the subject of a composition, in suspending the exercise of personsl taste and feeling in the spectators, we have a striking instance in our own country, where this cause must, from collateral circumstances, operate less forcibly. Mr West's pictures would not be tolerated, but from the respect inspired by the subjects of which he treats. When a young lady and her mother, the wife and daughter of a clergyman, are told, that a gawky ill-favoured youth is the beloved disciple of Christ, and that a tall, starched figure of a woman visible near him is the Virgin Mary, whatever they might have thought before, they can no more refrain from shedding tears, than if they had seen the very persons recorded in sacred history. It is not the picture, but the associations connected with it, that produce the effect.

to its object. Positive encouragements and rewards will not make an honest man, or a great artist. The assumed familiarity, and condescending goodness of patrons and vice-patrons will serve to intoxicate rather than to sober the mind, and a card to dinner in Cleveland row or Portland place, will have a tendency to divert the student's thoughts from his morning's work, rather than to rivet them upon it. The device by which a celebrated painter has represented the Virgin teaching the infant Christ to read by pointing with a butterfly to the letters of the alphabet, has not been thought a very wise one. Correggio is the most melancholy instance on record of the want of a proper encouragement of the arts: but a golden shower of patronage, tempting as that which fell into the lap of his own Danäe, and dropping prize medals and epic mottoes, would not produce another Correggio!

I shall conclude with offering some remarks on the question,—Whether Academies and Institutions must not be supposed to assist the progress of the Fine Arts, by promoting a wider taste for them?

In general, it must happen in the first stages of the arts, that as none but those who had a natural genius for them, would attempt to practise them, so none but those who had a natural taste for them would pretend to judge of, or criticise them. This must be an incalculable advantage to the man of true genius, for it is no other than the privilege of being tried by his peers. In an age when connoisseurship had not become a fashion; when religion, war, and intrigue, occupied the time and

thoughts of the great, only those minds of superior refinement would be led to notice the works of art who had a real sense of their excellence, and in giving way to the powerful bent of his own genius, the painter was most likely to consult the law of his judges. He had not to deal with pretenders to taste through vanity, affectation, and idleness. He had to appeal to the higher faculties of the soul; to that deep and innate sensibility to truth and beauty, which required only an object to have its enthusiasm excited; and to that independent strength of mind, which, in the midst of ignorance and barbarism, hailed and fostered genius, wherever it met with it. Titian was patronized by Charles V.—Count Castiglione was the friend of Raphael. These were true patrons, and true critics: and as there were no others (for the world in general merely looked on, and wondered) there can be little doubt, that such a period of dearth of factitious patronage, would be the most favourable to the full development of the greatest talents, and the attainment of the highest excellence.

The diffusion of taste is not, then, the same thing as the improvement of taste; but it is only the former of these objects that is promoted by public institutions and other artificial means. The number of candidates for fame, and of pretenders to criticism, is thus increased beyond all proportion, but the quantity of genius and feeling remains the same, with this difference, that the man of genius is lost in the crowd of competitors, who would never have become such but from encouragement and example; and that the opinion of those few persons

whom nature intended for judges, is drowned in the noisy decisions of shallow smatterers in taste. The principle of universal suffrage, however applicable to matters of government, which concern the common feelings and common interests of society, is by no means so to matters of taste, which can only be decided upon by the most refined understandings. It is throwing down the barriers which separate knowledge and feeling from ignorance and vulgarity, and proclaiming a Bartholomew-fair show of the fine arts—

"And fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

The public taste is, therefore, necessarily vitiated, in proportion as it is public; it is lowered with every infusion it receives of common opinion. The greater the number of judges, the less capable must they be of judging, for the addition to the number of good ones will always be small, while the multitude of bad ones is endless, and thus the decay of art may be said to be the necessary consequence of its progress.

Can there be a greater confirmation of these remarks than to look at the texture of that assemblage of select critics, who every year visit the exhibition at Somerset House from all parts of the metropolis of this United Kingdom? Is it at all wonderful, that for such a succession of connoisseurs, such a collection of works of art should be provided; where the eye in vain seeks relief from the glitter of the frames in the glare of the pictures; where vermilion cheeks make vermilion lips look pale; where the merciless splendour of the painter's pallet puts nature out of countenance; and where the unmeaning

grimace of fashion and folly is almost the only variety in the wide dazzling waste of colour. Indeed, the great error of British art has hitherto been a desire to produce a popular effect by the cheapest and most obvious means, and at the expense of everything else;—to lose all the delicacy and variety of nature in one undistinguished bloom of florid health; and all precision, truth, and refinement of character, in the same harmless mould of smiling, self-complacent insipidity.

"Pleased with itself, that all the world can please."

It is probable that in all that stream of idleness and curiosity which flows in, hour after hour, and day after day, to the richly hung apartments of Somerset House, there are not fifty persons to be found who can really distinguish "a Guido from a daub," or who would recognise a work of the most refined genius from the most common and every-day performance. Come, then, ye banks of Wapping, and classic haunts of Ratcliffe Highway, and join thy fields, blithe Tothill—let the post-chaises, gay with oaken boughs, be put in requisition for school-boys from Eton and Harrow, and school-girls from Hackney and Mile-end,—and let a jury be empannelled to decide on the merits of Raphael and ———. The verdict will be infallible. We remember having been formerly a good deal amused with seeing a smart, handsome-looking Quaker lad, standing before a picture of Christ as the Saviour of the World, with a circle of young female friends around him, and a newspaper in his hand, out of which he read to his admiring auditors a

criticism on the picture ascribing to it every perfection, human or divine.—Now, in truth, the colouring was anything but solemn, the drawing anything but grand, the expression anything but sublime. The friendly critic had, however, bedaubed it so with praise, that it was not easy to gainsay its wondrous excellence. In fact, one of the worst consequences of the establishment of academies, &c. is, that the rank and station of the painter throw a lustre round his pictures, which imposes completely on the herd of spectators, and makes it a kind of treason against the art, for any one else to speak his mind freely, or detect the imposture. If, indeed, the election to title and academic honours went by merit, this might form a kind of clue or standard for the public to decide justly upon:—but we have heard that genius and taste determine precedence there, almost as little as at court; and that modesty and talent stand very little chance indeed with interest, cabal, impudence, and cunning. The purity or liberality of professional decisions cannot, therefore, in such cases be expected to counteract the tendency which an appeal to the public has to lower the standard of taste. The artist, to succeed, must let himself down to the level of his judges, for he cannot raise them up to his own. The highest efforts of genius, in every walk of art, can never be properly understood by mankind in general: there are numberless beauties and truths which lie far beyond their comprehension. It is only as refinement or sublimity are blended with other qualities of a more obvious and common nature, that they pass current with the world. Common sense, which has

been sometimes appealed to as the criterion of taste, is nothing but the common capacity, applied to common facts and feelings; but it neither is, nor pretends to be, the judge of anything else.—To suppose that it can really appreciate the excellence of works of high art, is as absurd as to suppose that it could produce them. Taste is the highest degree of sensibility, or the impression of the most cultivated and sensible minds, as genius is the result of the highest powers of feeling and invention. It may be objected that the public taste is capable of gradual improvement, because in the end the public do justice to works of the greatest merit. This is a mistake. The reputation ultimately and slowly affixed to works of genius, is stamped upon them by authority, not by popular consent, nor the common sense of the world. We imagine that the admiration of the works of celebrated men has become common, because the admiration of their names has become so. But does not every ignorant connoisseur pretend the same veneration, and talk with the same vapid assurance of M. Angelo, though he has never seen even a copy of any of his pictures, as if he had studied them accurately,—merely because Sir J. Reynolds has praised him? Is Milton more popular now than when the Paradise Lost was first published? Or does he not rather owe his reputation to the judgment of a few persons in every successive period, accumulating in his favour, and overpowering by its weight the public indifference? Why is Shakspeare popular? Not from his refinement of character or sentiment, so much as from his power of telling a story,—the variety and in-

vention,—the tragic catastrophe, and broad farce, of his plays? His characters of Imogen or Desdemona, Hamlet or Kent, are little understood or relished by the generality of readers. Does not Boccaccio pass to this day for a writer of ribaldry, because his jests and lascivious tales were all that caught the vulgar ear, while the story of the Falcon is forgotten?

No. IX.

TRANSLATION OF A SONNET BY GIOVANNI DELLA CASA ON A PORTRAIT BY TITIAN OF HIS MISTRESS.—Vol. II. P. 208.

Titian! it is herself—in other guise
Thy living tints my idol here present;
See—she unfolds—she turns her beauteous eyes—
She speaks—she breathes—nay, seems to move intent!
What joy is mine, amid continual sighs,
Here to regain some portion of content,
As now on her—now this sweet image bent,
My doubting heart to find the impostor tries.
But I—shall ever I the inward part
This heavenly shape's diviner soul pourtray?
Ah! hand too weak for enterprise supreme!
Help, Phœbus, thou! (since Love o'erwhelms my lay)
Guide thou my pen, and let the glorious theme
To fame transcendant raise thy noble art!

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. AND W. REYNELL,
Broad street, Golden square.